

VISION 20/20

WICHITA FALLS, TEXAS



THE GATEWAY TO TEXAS...

City of Wichita Falls Vision 20/20 Plan

July 2008



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DEFENSE DIVERSIFICATION PLAN





Executive Summary

This study was prepared under contract with the City of Wichita Falls, Texas, with financial support from the Office of Economic Adjustment, Department of Defense. The content reflects the views of the City of Wichita Falls and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Office of Economic Adjustment.

The Wichita Falls' regional economy has historically been driven by its government and energy sectors, and over the past 50 years the manufacturing sector has developed as the region's third economic engine. Recent events, however, underscore the region's need for further economic diversification. The 2005 round of the Base Realignment and Closures (BRAC) process will likely result in an estimated loss of approximately 1,990 direct and indirect jobs from Sheppard Air Force Base (SAFB). In addition, the closure of the Delphi plant and the recently announced closure of the Saint Gobain-Vetrotex plant will result in the loss of over 10 percent of the region's manufacturing jobs.

To address these economic challenges, the Wichita Falls region must effectively position itself to compete with the Metroplex and other emerging regional centers to attract talent, investment, and employers, as well as additional retail spending and healthcare services. This plan outlines strategies and actions that will strengthen the region's primary economic assets, enhance its ability to compete, and promote economic diversification.

VISION, GOALS, & OPPORTUNITIES

Economic development goals and strategies must be driven by a clear vision that directs community resources and guides decision-making. The vision for Wichita Falls that provides a framework for this plan is the following vision statement:

***“A VIBRANT REGIONAL CENTER ATTRACTIVE
TO TALENT AND INVESTMENT.”***

To support this vision, we propose the following three goals:

GOAL ONE: DEVELOP, RETAIN, ATTRACT, AND ENGAGE TALENT.

GOAL TWO: DIVERSIFY AND GROW THE ECONOMIC BASE.

**GOAL THREE: PROMOTE AND ENHANCE WICHITA FALLS'
QUALITY OF PLACE.**



With these three goals in mind, we identified the primary opportunities for Wichita Falls. These primary opportunity areas are: **DOWNTOWN**, **TALENT**, **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**, **IMAGE / MARKETING**, and **SPECIAL AREAS**. The priority projects for each opportunity area are listed below.

DOWNTOWN

- Financing districts
- Formal incentives policy
- Downtown market report
- Downtown marketing campaign
- Catalyst project

TALENT

- “Come Home to Wichita Falls”-type campaign
- SAFB veterans survey and database
- Next Generation leadership initiative

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- Recruitment of emerging sectors
- Healthcare cluster development
- Entrepreneurship development

IMAGE / MARKETING

- Comprehensive marketing & image study
- Local positive attitude campaign

SPECIAL AREAS

- Gateway Project
- Downtown revitalization

In the report that follows, we outline strategies and actions as well as discuss the priority projects for each opportunity area. We then provide a plan to guide the implementation of the strategies and projects. Following the implementation guide are detailed profiles of the recommended target industry and business sectors (Appendix A). Finally, we include the results of the SAFB veterans survey (Appendix B), the entrepreneurial assessment (Appendix C), and the community needs assessment (Appendix D).

	2006	BRAC Losses	Post- BRAC
SAFB Employment			
Military (includes students)			
Jobs	8864	-1907	6957
Payroll	\$469,308,734	-\$100,967,030	\$368,341,704
Civilian			
Jobs	1402	-81	1321
Payroll	\$68,737,892	-\$3,971,305	\$64,766,587
Contractor			
Jobs	2621	-2	2619
Payroll	\$15,447,911	\$0	\$15,447,911
Indirect Jobs			
Jobs	3382	0	3382
Payroll	\$99,396,980	\$0	\$99,396,980
Total			
Jobs	16269	-1990	14279
Payroll	\$652,891,517	-\$104,938,335	\$547,953,182
Military Retirees (in 50 mi radius)*			
Retirees	3873	0	3873
Payroll	\$72,084,000	\$0	\$72,084,000

SOURCE: Sheppard Air Force Base, pro-forma calculation by TIP Strategies.

Military Aviation and Wichita Falls

The origins of military aviation in Wichita Falls date back almost a century to World War I with the establishment of an Army aviation training field named Call Field. Call Field was an active military installation between 1917 and 1919, with squadrons flying in overseas service. The training field encompassed 643 acres, including present day Call Field Road. It was generally bounded by McNiell to Fairway Blvd. and Southwest Parkway to Kell Blvd. By 1941, Sheppard Field was established as an Air Corps technical training center and continues to play a key role in the Air Force's Air Education & Training Command (AETC).

Introduction

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The 2005 round of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission's recommendations resulted in the planned transfer of Sheppard Air Force Base's medical training missions to San Antonio's Fort Sam Houston. This will result in the loss of approximately 1,990 jobs and students. Furthermore, the reduction in personnel at Sheppard will also likely have a negative impact on its contract spending, which currently injects \$228 million into the economy. In addition, local public schools, particularly Tower Elementary in Burkburnett ISD, that are dependent on school impact funds may see a funding loss as a result of BRAC, and local higher education institutions that provide post-secondary education for military personnel and trainees may see a reduction in their enrollment and tuition receipts.

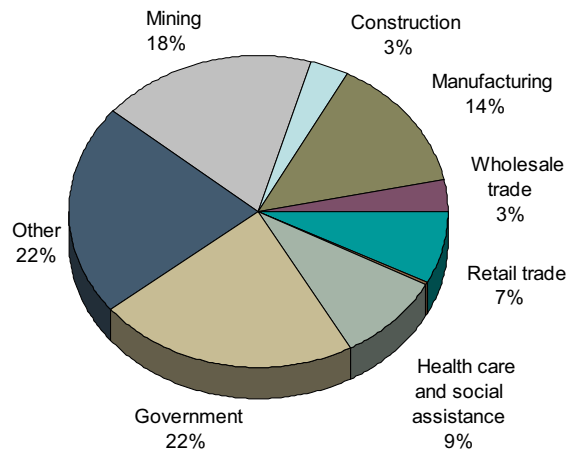
In preparation for these losses, the City of Wichita Falls contracted TIP Strategies, an Austin-based economic development consulting firm, to assist the city in the preparation of a defense diversification plan. The resulting report outlines strategies to implement that will strengthen Wichita Falls' primary economic development assets and promote economic diversification.

While this report specifically focuses on economic development and diversification in Wichita Falls, it is imperative that the communities in the region, including Wichita Falls, Burkburnett, and Iowa Park, recognize the important role that Sheppard plays in the region. They must be vigilant in recognizing both the community and economic impact Sheppard has on the region and in visibly supporting the needs of the training missions stationed at the base. The region needs to continue and even strengthen their support of the base and advocate new missions to promote growth at the base. These actions will hopefully avoid potential surprises as a result of future base realignment studies.

PAST HISTORY, CURRENT CHALLENGES

With the arrival of six railroads at the turn of the 20th century, Wichita Falls became a transportation and supply center for Northwest Texas and Southeastern Oklahoma. The discovery of oil in the Electra oil field (1911) and the Burkburnett fields (1918) led to an economic shift as oil-related industries and other support services rose to prominence.

Wichita Falls MSA GDP by Industry, 2005



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

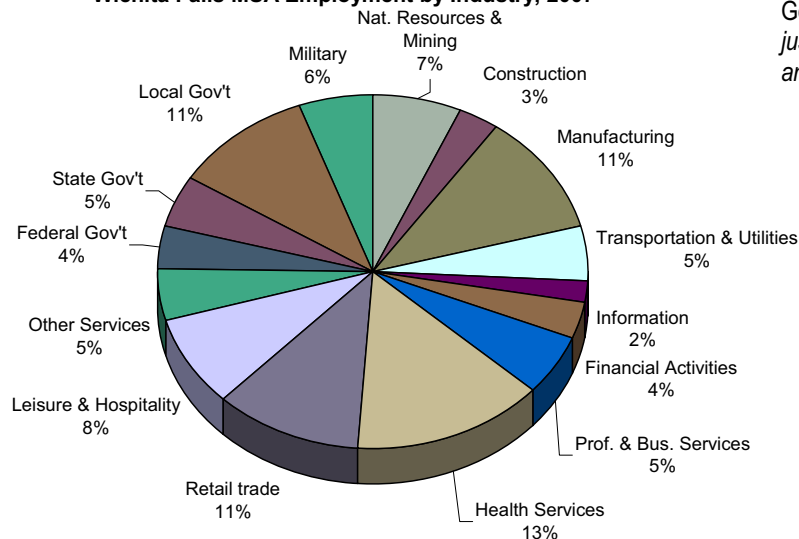
However, oil production in the area declined in importance in the 1960s with competition from other areas of the state. At this time, Industrial Development, Inc. (the precursor to the present-day Board of Commerce and Industry) was formed and successfully recruited a number of large primary employers throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Nevertheless, the 1980s presented new challenges with the closure of several manufacturing facilities and the severe decline in oil prices mid-way through the decade.

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, Wichita Falls has continued to seek economic diversification. Although these efforts have resulted in the growth of the manufacturing sector, the economy remains relatively dependent on both the oil sector (included in mining) and government (see figures to the left).

Wichita Falls has long served as an important economic center in the Texoma region between Dallas-Fort Worth and Oklahoma City. However, with the dramatic growth of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex in the past decade, Wichita Falls has seen its role as a regional center diminish as the gravitational pull of the Metroplex grows and regional transportation linkages with the Metroplex are strengthened.

As a result, Wichita Falls must directly compete with the Metroplex for talent and investment as well as employers, healthcare services, and retail spending. To compete successfully, Wichita Falls must carve out a niche for itself and capitalize on the amenities and assets it can offer that a Goliath-sized metropolitan area cannot. In this way, *the central challenge for Wichita Falls is not just economic diversification, but also how to position itself to compete favorably with the Metroplex and other emerging regional centers, such as Lawton, Oklahoma.*

Wichita Falls MSA Employment by Industry, 2007



SOURCE: Economy.com

Methodology & Approach

METHODOLOGY

To better understand the region, its challenges and opportunities, the consulting team focused on collecting both qualitative and quantitative data through site visits, interviews, and primary and secondary data sources. These research activities included:

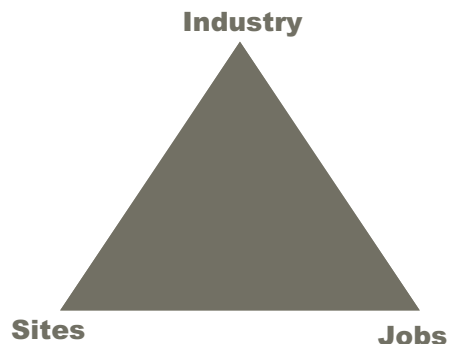
- ☐ Data collection, analysis and assessment:
 - ◆ Analysis of demographic and economic trends of Wichita Falls compared to peer communities
 - ◆ Analysis of occupation and industry employment data to identify areas in which Wichita Falls holds a competitive advantage state-wide and nationally
 - ◆ Economic impact of SAFB and BRAC
 - ◆ Inventory of entrepreneurial assets
- ☐ Stakeholder interviews (24)
- ☐ Focus groups
 - ◆ Downtown business and property owners (50 attendees)
 - ◆ Manufacturers (11 attendees)
 - ◆ Healthcare (18 attendees)
 - ◆ Human resource managers (17 attendees)
 - ◆ Entrepreneurs (12 attendees)
- ☐ Public input forum (85+ attendees)

With this information, the consulting team created a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) and identified the areas of opportunity that create the framework for the report. The SWOT analysis is presented in Appendix D: Community Assessment.



OUR APPROACH

Figure 1

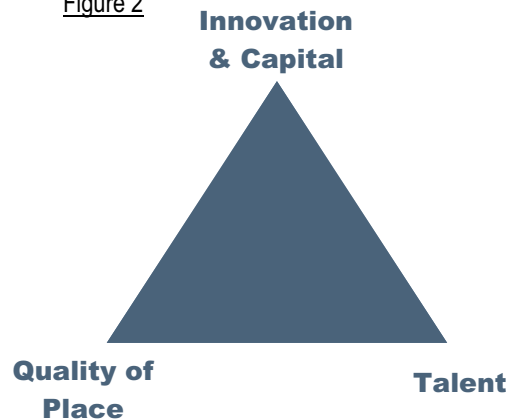


Economic development is undergoing major structural changes, ranging from site requirements to talent to livability to regional planning. Working within the vacuum of traditional economic development is becoming increasingly untenable, as the benefits of primary industries, retail growth and professional services have shifted, requiring new analytical approaches.

Economic development planning has failed to keep pace with global economic changes. A graphic representation of the old economic planning models might envision a triangle representing the following goals: industry, sites, and jobs (Figure 1). This model assumes that the recruitment of new businesses could be best accomplished by providing sites in industrial parks, which in turn would result in the creation of new jobs. For many regions, this remains the default economic development strategy. Unfortunately, this approach depends heavily on tax abatements and the availability of fully serviced land. As a result, the benefits of attracting new industry and “creating new jobs” is often compromised by a lack of services, reduced land for housing and open space, and increasingly compromised economic vitality.

Economic development planning that is responsive to new opportunities—an approach championed by TIP Strategies—sees the same “triangle” with different goals: innovation and capital, quality of place, and talent (Figure 2).

Figure 2



Rather than relying on incentives and cheap land to recruit industry, this approach recognizes the increasing importance of quality of place in the attraction and retention of business. This approach keeps quality of place on equal footing with innovation and capital. It recognizes that community development initiatives may generate a return that is as significant as that of industrial parks (which are often disconnected from the community and require huge public investment). We also see “jobs” as something more than just a reduction of unemployment—looking instead at the duration of those jobs, the wages they pay and their impact on the community. This broader perspective is what we describe as “talent.” It holds the view that retaining and attracting younger workers is not synonymous with job training or current workforce programs.

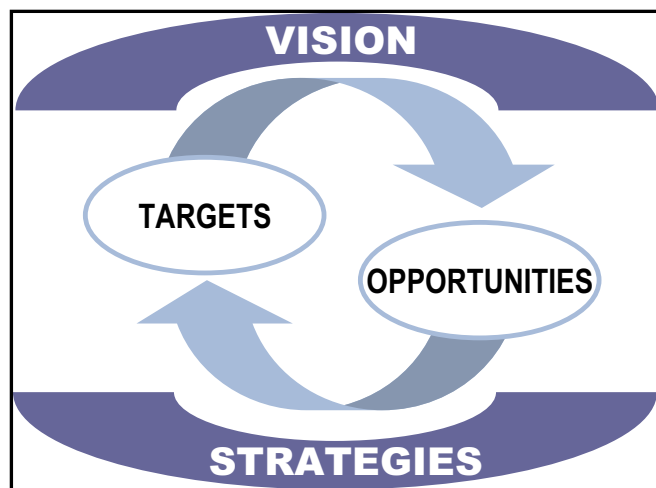
TIP defines economic development as the application of public resources to stimulate private investment. This definition recognizes that decisions regarding everything from telecommunications to workforce development must be informed by the response they will receive from the private sector. Since private investment is increasingly linked to technology and knowledge workers, it is only sensible for public entities to respond in kind. This approach frequently requires infrastructure investment, making it congruent with the site selection and expansion goals of private companies.

economic development (n)

1. the application of public resources to stimulate private investment

- *TIP Strategies, Inc.*

What we have learned from our team's experience in cities, counties, regions, and states underscores the benefits of a more holistic approach. There are, regrettably, too many examples in which a project is evaluated only on a fiscal basis, only to leave residents of the community dissatisfied and neighborhoods more economically fragmented and less economically viable than before the project was undertaken. As a result, an economic development methodology based on **TALENT**, **INNOVATION**, and **PLACE** helps redefine the types of business as well as the types of public resources under consideration, and provides for the basis of a more realistic evaluation of options to stimulate private investment.



Opportunities

With these three goals in mind, we identified the primary opportunities for Wichita Falls. For each opportunity, we outline strategies and actions, identify priority projects, and provide a plan to guide the implementation of these projects, strategies, and actions. These primary opportunity areas are listed below:

- Downtown
- Talent
- Business Development
- Image / Marketing
- Special Areas

Vision, Goals, & Opportunities

Economic development goals, strategies, and actions must be driven by a clear vision. The practical value of the vision is in directing community resources and guiding decision making. Successful vision statements are bold. They provide clear direction, are comprehensive, and can be supported by goals and strategies. In turn, the opportunities and targets that are identified in the plan help promote the vision, goals, and strategies.

The statement below represents the vision for Wichita Falls that creates a framework for the opportunities, strategies and actions identified in this plan.

VISION STATEMENT:

***“A VIBRANT REGIONAL CENTER
ATTRACTIVE TO TALENT AND INVESTMENT”***

As a regional center, Wichita Falls draws residents and economic activity from surrounding areas. Strengthening its position as a regional center will be essential to Wichita Falls' long-term sustainability and economic vitality. The ability of Wichita Falls to attract talent and investment are two key elements to strengthening its position as regional center.

We believe the following three goals will support the proposed vision and provide a strong framework for strategies and actions:

GOAL ONE: DEVELOP, RETAIN, ATTRACT, AND ENGAGE TALENT.

GOAL TWO: DIVERSIFY AND GROW THE ECONOMIC BASE.

GOAL THREE: PROMOTE AND ENHANCE WICHITA FALLS' QUALITY OF PLACE.

Priority Projects

- **FINANCING DISTRICTS**
- **FORMAL INCENTIVES POLICY**
- **DOWNTOWN MARKET REPORT**
- **DOWNTOWN MARKETING CAMPAIGN**
- **CATALYST PROJECT**

Downtown

Downtown Wichita Falls served as the center of the community from the city's founding in 1882 through the oil boom until the 1970s. The advent of the Sikes Senter Mall and surrounding commercial development in 1974 drew large retailers, including JC Penney and Sears, out of downtown. This change in commercial development patterns, in conjunction with a weakening of Wichita Fall's oil sector, hastened the decline of downtown as the commercial center.

As the commercial draw of the mall area grew, residential development followed, moving growth in a southwesterly direction. This pattern has continued to the present. Consequently, downtown is no longer the geographic center of the city and is "out of the way" relative to the newer commercial centers around the mall. Downtown must now compete with newer commercial centers for tenants and visitors without the advantage of a central location within the city.

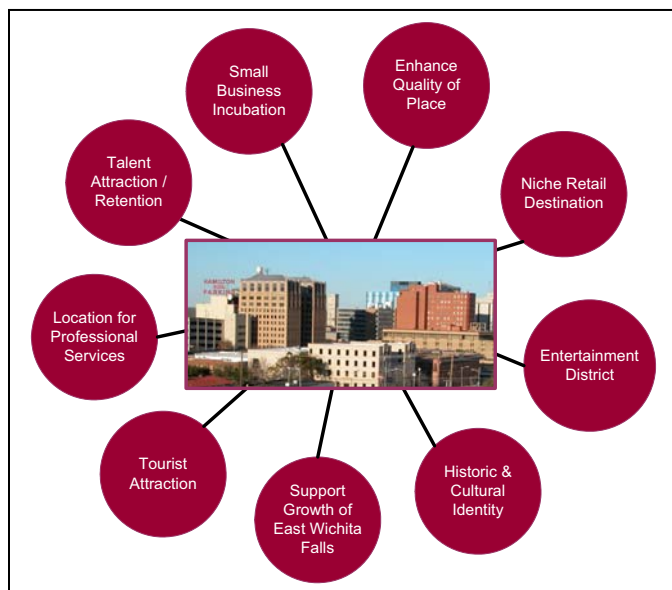
As a result of these development patterns, downtown has become largely a workday destination for employees and people conducting business with downtown institutions and establishments. In addition, the vacancy rate of downtown buildings is high and many historic buildings have fallen into disrepair. It is no longer the busy center of the community that it once was.

OPPORTUNITY

A vibrant downtown is a key component to economic vitality. Downtown revitalization influences every economic development issue facing Wichita Falls, from talent attraction and retention to quality of place to economic diversification.

The economic potential of downtown Wichita Falls is obvious. The historic buildings, walkable street grid, existing businesses and institutions create a strong base for revitalization efforts.

With 6,000 students at Midwestern State University and a daily average of almost 6,000 students at Sheppard AFB, Wichita Falls has a sizeable population of young adults that generally would take advantage of downtown retail and entertainment options. In addition to attracting young adults, a revitalized downtown with a diverse range of entertainment, retail, residential, and employment options could draw from over 100,000 residents in Wichita Falls and over 350,000 residents in the region. The implementation of effective strategies as part of a well-coordinated revitalization effort can make a significant difference in restoring downtown Wichita Falls to a prime destination in the region. This, in turn, will greatly enhance the community's economic vitality.



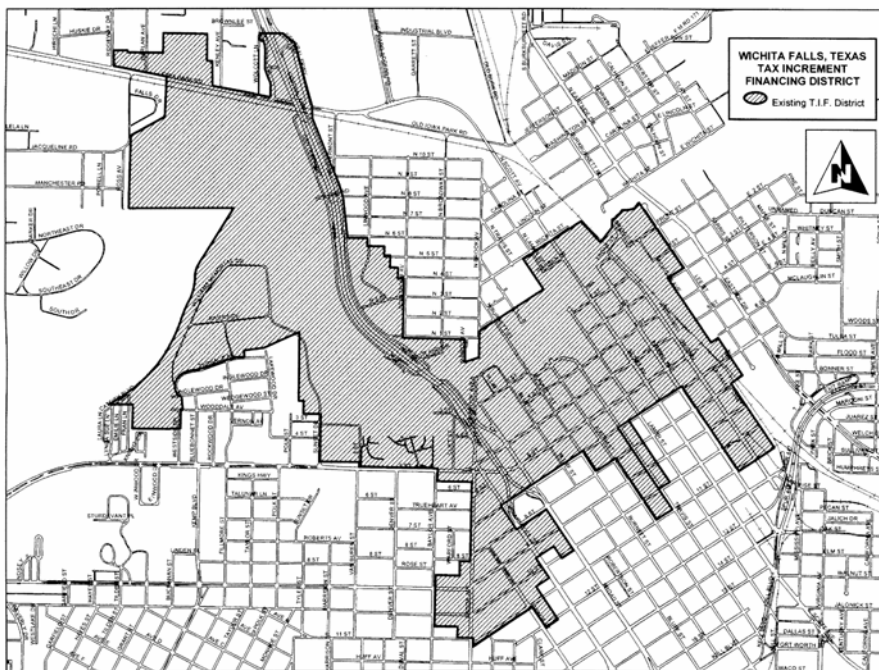
STRATEGIES

1. Formalize tools for promoting revitalization.

"A healthy and vibrant downtown boosts the economic health and quality of life in a community. Specifically, it creates jobs, incubates small businesses, reduces sprawl, protects property values, and increases the community's options for goods and services. A healthy downtown is a symbol of community pride and history."

- The Pew Partnership for Civic Change

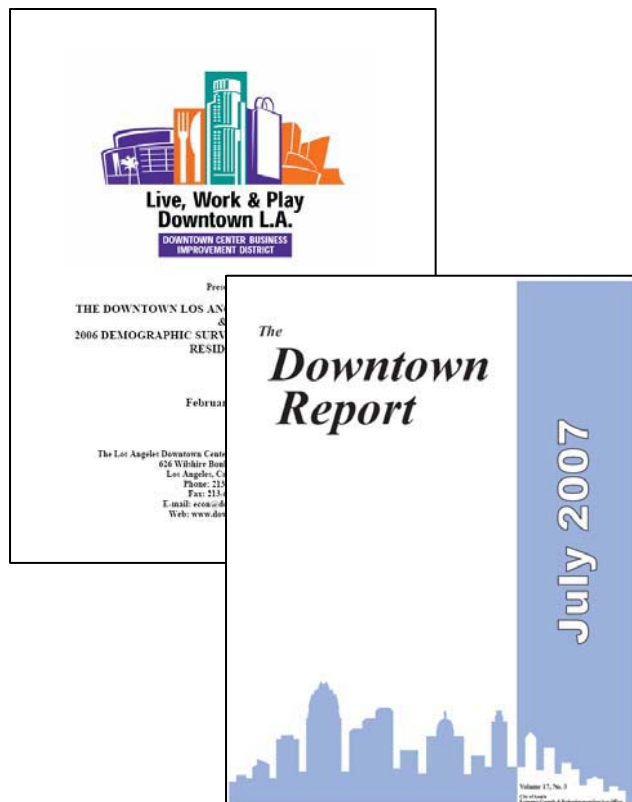
- ❑ Secure funding sources to finance downtown revitalization initiatives and projects.
 - ♦ Recreate a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) that covers the downtown area. Revise the zone boundaries to take into consideration any planned public sector projects that may result in parcels' removal from the tax roll. Time the creation of the TIRZ to capitalize on planned developments.
 - ♦ Create a municipal management district or a business improvement district that overlays the downtown core. This district will have the authority to raise funds that can be used for marketing activities, landscape maintenance, infrastructure improvements, and generally to supplement services provided in the area.
 - ♦ Establish the organizational capacity to manage both financing programs. Many cities have created non-profit organizations that are managed by the district boards and have staff to handle the day-to-day operations of the programs. Downtown Wichita Falls Development, Inc. (DWFD) should be given this responsibility. In addition, DWFD can continue to spearhead downtown revitalization efforts, manage and guide investment in downtown to promote the vision of the downtown master plan, and organize and advocate for downtown business and property owners. Funding for the organization should consist of a mix of contributions from the financing districts, membership fees, and private donations.
 - ♦ Set a goal to invest a set percentage of 4A and/or 4B funds in downtown projects. Attracting primary employers and supporting community development downtown can help stimulate growth and counteract growth pressures from other areas of the city.
 - ♦ Secure any available federal and state funds that may facilitate revitalization efforts.



Formal incentives policies should be carefully crafted in a transparent manner to ensure that they yield a net benefit to area taxpayers. The following principals should be considered when establishing a policy: 1) the targeted investment would not occur without the incentive and 2) the investment should generate new economic activity in the area instead of displacing existing businesses.

When creating an incentives deal for a particular prospect, we recommend the following: 1) a statement demonstrating how the proposed incentive relates to the broader economic development strategies, 2) a formal cost/benefit estimate weighing the estimated direct/indirect benefits (e.g., tax base enhancement, increase in retail sales, increase in wage rates, etc.) to the incentive costs (e.g., tax abatements, training subsidies, infrastructure improvements, etc.) associated with a particular deal, and 3) a “clawback” agreement that guarantees the recovery of incentives funds if the firm makes fewer hires or investment expenditures than promised.

- ❑ Establish a formal incentives policy to encourage private investment downtown, as part of a comprehensive city-wide incentives policy. These incentives should be available for primary and secondary employers as well as existing and new businesses. In addition, this policy should be consistent with BCI's existing incentives policy for primary employers.
 - ♦ In cooperation with the 4A and 4B Board of Directors, create an incentives policy specific for downtown. The policy should incorporate a variety of tools, such as: Chapter 380 agreements, property tax abatement, and possibly reimbursement of certain fees as well as special programs to help defray renovation costs resulting from asbestos/lead paint remediation, historic preservation, and modernizing buildings to adhere to the city's building code. These programs could include forgivable loans, a revolving loan fund offering low-interest loans, or both.
 - ♦ Utilize a formal cost/benefit model similar to the model used by BCI to evaluate whether or not to offer incentives packages. This model should weigh the estimated direct/indirect benefits (e.g., tax base enhancement, increase in retail sales, increase in wage rates) and the incentive costs (e.g., tax abatements, training subsidies, infrastructure improvements) associated with a particular deal. The model should also incorporate the City's objectives for downtown development to ensure that projects promote these goals.
 - ♦ Structure the programs to include a “claw-back” agreement that guarantees the recovery of incentives funds if the firm does not meet pre-established milestones.
 - ♦ Establish an application process for prospects wishing to submit a project for consideration in the incentives program.
 - ♦ Create a Web site to publicize information regarding the incentives policy and application process. Post the application and descriptions of programs and process.
- ❑ Track growth and development in downtown to show progress towards goals.
 - ♦ Continue to collect survey responses to establish the baseline conditions of the downtown market. The key metrics that should be tracked are:



- Housing units (total, rentable, occupied, average price per square foot)
- Office space (total square feet, useable square feet, occupied square feet, average price per square foot)
- Retail space (total square feet, useable square feet, occupied square feet, average price per square foot)
- Arts & cultural establishments (number of establishments, visitors)

- ◆ This survey should be conducted at least annually to track growth in each of these areas.
 - ◆ With the information obtained in the survey, produce a report card summarizing the data and achievements towards revitalization efforts. Include any projects either fully or partially funded with public funds.
 - ◆ Publicize reports to local and regional realtors, brokers, and developers. Post the report card on the Downtown Wichita Falls Development, Inc. Web site with links from the City of Wichita Falls' site and BCI's site.
- ☐ Design and launch an effective marketing campaign to promote downtown as the prime area of Wichita Falls to "live, work, and play."
- ◆ Establish the image downtown stakeholders wish to portray. Build consensus for the image and a primary message to convey this image.
 - ◆ Design a marketing plan for internal audiences to promote this image. This plan should set out goals based on measurable timelines – six months, one year, two years, and five years. This marketing plan should identify target audiences, effective marketing tools appropriate for each audience, and strategies for communicating the primary message. It is imperative that actionable and attainable goals set the pace for future marketing inside the community. This will help the city build achievable plans where a Return on Investment (ROI) plays a key role.



an·chor (n)

1. a reliable or principal support
2. a large business (as a department store) that attracts customers and other businesses to a shopping center or mall

- the Random House Unabridged Dictionary

- ♦ Continue to plan events to draw people downtown. Use annual events such as the St. Patrick's Day Festival, the Downtown Shrimp and Wine Festival, the Downtown City Lights Parade, and the Hotter 'n Hell Hundred to showcase downtown. Make sure that events are well-publicized and of high quality. A positive impression of downtown and downtown events must be conveyed in order to keep people coming back.
- ♦ The media and public relations strategy should be designed to celebrate the successes of downtown revitalization in order to build momentum for the initiative. Develop a community newsletter focused on downtown. This newsletter should reach out to the community at-large to communicate events, profile businesses, describe new projects, and discuss ideas for improving downtown. An e-newsletter could be distributed to mailing lists maintained by downtown businesses and organizations, BCI, MSU, and Sheppard. Through traditional and non-traditional media sources, profile the catalyst projects and other important projects to raise awareness and generate interest.
- ♦ Coordinate the downtown marketing campaign with a city-wide campaign to reduce overlap and leverage co-marketing opportunities.

2. Support the establishment of "anchors".

- ☐ Spread the anchors across the core of downtown such that pedestrian and vehicular traffic must pass other tenants when traveling between anchors. This location strategy will provide heightened visibility for other tenants located in the core.
- ☐ Ensure the new City Hall is constructed within or adjacent to the downtown core to serve as a primary employment anchor (*See Downtown Master Plan, Chapter 2, Objective 1*).
- ☐ Encourage the development of a flagship mixed-use project that includes niche retail, entertainment options, fine dining, and residential units. This project should be designed with the goal of promoting downtown as an after-hours destination. However, careful attention should be paid to attract tenants that complement, rather than compete with, existing downtown businesses. (*See Strategy 4*)



The Holt

Downtown Housing Units

La Salle Crossing	15
The Holt	41
Travis Crossing	11
Franklin Place Apartments	17
The Plantation	27
Aztec Apartments	12
Austin School Lofts	25
Midtown Manor	150
Total	298

Housing Units within Downtown Core	67
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3. **Use residential development as a primary catalyst.** (See *Downtown Master Plan, Business Development, Objective 4*). Successful and sustainable urban areas are those that bring people to live, work, play, and learn in the urban center. There are many practical and intrinsic advantages of attracting a critical mass of people back to downtown. Urban planners and strategists have known for years that “rooftops” or resident populations become engines that drive a diversified economy including retail and neighborhood support. Urban dwellers tend to spend more and be more entrepreneurial, involved in community leadership, and committed to a sense of community. For these reasons, further residential development downtown, especially in the core, should be a priority.

- ❑ Revise the city plan and zoning strategies to allow for greater densities for downtown residential development.
- ❑ Consider imposing a minimum number of units per acre for residential developments in the area. For example, residential developments within this area should get open space credits if located near a park or well-landscaped areas.
- ❑ Use local government incentives to enable developments that produce residential density and conform to urban character standards.
- ❑ Encourage residential developments that incorporate good urban character. Some of the key elements of good urban character:
 - ◆ Buildings should face the street and form an urban edge with little or no setback from the urban walkway and right of way.
 - ◆ Buildings should have entryways facing the street frontages.
 - ◆ Encourage windows and transparency facing the street.
 - ◆ Buildings should address the street level and first 2 to 3 levels with architectural elements that create a human scale, such as canopies, entries, windows, transoms, articulated architecture, and avoid long solid walls.
 - ◆ Avoid surface parking on the street as areas develop with urban densities.
 - ◆ Urban walkways should range between 8 feet and 18 feet wide depending on the density of pedestrian traffic and other sidewalk uses anticipated.



Destination Retail

“Increasingly, entertainment and recreational trips (not just shopping trips) are generating retail sales. After a pleasant meal, people quite often look for opportunities to extend the experience by browsing in a bookstore, shopping for a special piece of clothing or luxury item (like flowers, jewelry, or artwork), or taking in a movie or show. In this context, the downtown pedestrian routes, which are deliberately designed and mixed to provide views to the next leisure retail shopping opportunity, become vital. This form of retailing (known as destination retail) is not particularly suited to shopping centers; people rarely choose to spend a special night out at the mall.”

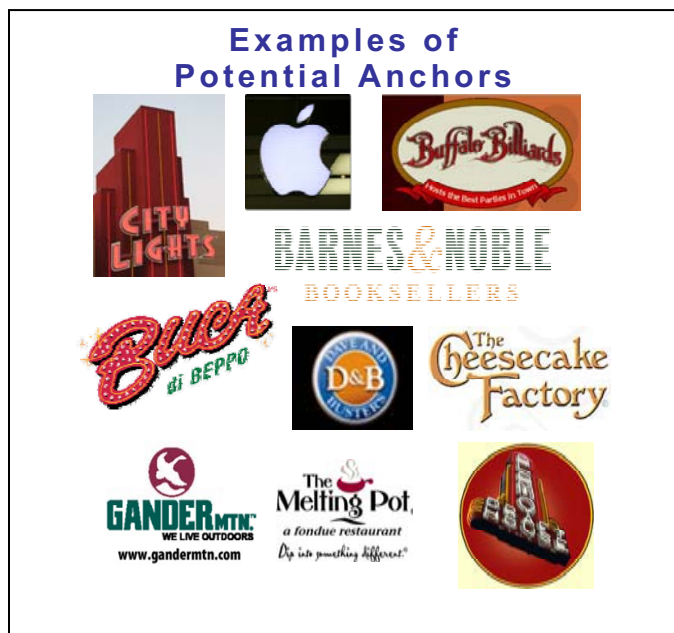
- The Urban Land Institute

- ♦ Encourage spaces for outdoor dining, occasional sidewalk sales, and vending at the appropriate locations.

4. Develop a retail strategy emphasizing “destination” retail.

- Develop and implement a retail recruitment program. This program should be designed to attract and support desirable retailers in the downtown core area. Elements of this program should include:
 - A regularly updated retail trade area and corresponding demographic information
 - A current database of available properties accessible on-line
 - Clearly defined incentives and/or business resources
 - Descriptions of projects in the downtown trade area that will affect retail demand
- ♦ As part of the program design, meet with existing retailers to better understand their product offerings, customer profiles, store traffic, as well as their needs and challenges in their present locations.
- ♦ Catalog downtown retailers to establish what exists and identify what goods and services are needed to attract visitors and serve downtown employees and residents in downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods.
- ♦ Create an information packet, including an inventory of available sites, to provide to commercial brokers and individuals seeking to establish retail downtown.
- ♦ Examples of downtown retail recruitment strategies include Knoxville, TN; Lincoln, NB; and St. Charles, IL.
 - Knoxville: http://web.knoxnews.com/pdf/1017downtown_knoxville_retail.pdf
 - Lincoln: <http://www.downtownlincoln.org/LincolnRetailFindings.pdf>

— St. Charles: <http://www.ci.st-charles.il.us/departments/cdd/downtown/1.html>



- ☐ Promote destination retail among the mix of uses in the flagship anchor project. This project should be structured as a public/private partnership and should include a significant retail anchor. If possible, the project should entail the creative reuse of an existing building rather than new construction. (See Strategy 2).
 - ♦ The anchor should be a major, exciting draw that cannot necessarily be found in a shopping mall. It could be an entertainment venue, a "special-occasion" restaurant, or a niche retail store.
- ☐ Encourage the concentration of retail in a defined district to create a critical mass of retail activity. This district should become a core of continuous street-level retail offering a diverse mix of interesting shopping options for downtown residents, employees, and visitors alike.
- ☐ DWFD, in partnership with BCI and the SBDC, should provide on-going business workshops and seminars for existing retailers and restaurants to communicate a common interest in the retailers' continued growth and success downtown. Retail Opportunity Workshops should also be held for those entrepreneurial-minded persons interested in opening a retail business downtown.

5. **Target professional services, company headquarters, and entrepreneurship to alleviate the surplus of office space downtown and surplus of office workers in Wichita Falls.**

- ☐ Actively recruit professional services firms and company headquarters to downtown through a well-targeted campaign. (See Business Development, Strategy 2).
- ☐ Facilitate the creation of a one-stop Entrepreneurship Center to foster the growth of new businesses in Wichita Falls. (See Business Development, Strategy 5).

Priority Projects

- **“COME HOME TO WICHITA FALLS”-TYPE CAMPAIGN**
- **SAFB VETERANS SURVEY AND DATABASE**
- **NEXT GENERATION LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE**

Redefining Talent

The concept of ***talent*** means more than a skilled workforce. It means recruiting talented people as well as cultivating the talent pool represented by groups as diverse as students, retirees, and entrepreneurs. It also means ensuring that the employees and companies that have been responsible for a community's growth continue to see a reason to remain in the area.

National demographic trends, most notably the aging of the baby boomers, suggest that demand for workers may soon outstrip supply. As a result, competition for labor is expected to increase among companies as well as communities. Focusing on the development, attraction, and retention of talent should, therefore, be an important part of any economic development strategy.

Talent

Nurturing and attracting talent is perhaps the most fundamental issue for creating long-term, sustainable economic vitality in the 21st Century. Much of this is due to the changing needs of U.S. employers as the economy transitions from manufacturing to services. More importantly, shifting demographic patterns are changing the way employers evaluate areas they are considering for possible relocation or expansion (See *box left*). Workforce availability is now the predominant site selection criterion for most industries.

The resulting phenomenon has become known as “the war for talent.” But a “talent” goal implies more than the typical workforce development and training issue. For regional centers like Wichita Falls, which must compete with the diverse amenities and higher wages offered by large cities and metropolitan areas, it means developing creative strategies for retaining and attracting people.

OPPORTUNITY

Fortunately for the Wichita Falls region, it possesses local assets making it competitive in attracting/retaining such talent. First and foremost, it is home to MSU – a nationally-respected four-year university that recruits a substantial portion of its student body and faculty from outside the region. The region's educational base is further enhanced by high quality local school districts and the presence of Vernon College.

Another key talent asset for the region is Sheppard Air Force Base (SAFB). Serving as the Air Force's largest technical training operation, each year thousands of airmen and officers arrive at SAFB to receive training in a variety of fields and disciplines. While many students at SAFB are assigned for transitory periods, others stationed at the base – such as trainers and student pilots – remain in the region for longer tours. Every year dozens of these personnel separate from service through SAFB and choose to live in the region. The presence of the base also attracts Air Force retirees who once served at SAFB and wish to return to the region.

STRATEGIES

1. Reestablish ties to former residents.

The consulting team recommends the regional partners pursue talent attraction activities. Initially, the consulting team recommends targeting individuals and former residents with existing ties to Wichita Falls. We believe this is likely to garner increased success for several

Best Practice: *Return to Roots*

- Return to Roots is a campaign aimed at the estimated 15,000 alumni who have graduated from Southwest Virginia's high schools in the last 20 years and may have moved away from the region.
- Return to Roots is an information portal highlighting the exciting job opportunities that exist today in Virginia's Great Southwest region.

www.returntoroots.org

reasons. First, the target audience already has a familiarity with the area, requiring less education about Wichita Falls. Second, individuals with strong ties to Wichita Falls, especially young professionals with families, may already desire to relocate if given a clear opportunity. Third, these individuals would presumably be easier to reach through existing social networks and, therefore, less expensive to target.

- ☐ Establish a marketing campaign urging former residents to "Come Home to Wichita Falls."
- ☐ Work with alumni organizations for MSU, Vernon College, and area high schools; career placement offices at the various schools; and key allies to assist in the development of a database of former students to whom marketing materials should be sent.
- ☐ Develop marketing materials and quarterly newsletter to inform former residents of opportunities and current events in Wichita Falls (e.g. job postings, business expansions, investment opportunities, planning initiatives etc.).
 - ♦ Consideration should be given to creating an electronic form of the newsletter for easier and less expensive transmittal.
 - ♦ Consideration should be given to distributing the newsletter to job placement counselors at area institutions of higher education as means for informing existing and former residents of local opportunities.
- ☐ Enlist the support of the *Wichita Falls Times Record News* in providing information about the newsletter or actually posting it directly to its website. In many cases, viewing of the "hometown newspaper" is the sole source for information about Wichita Falls for former residents.
- ☐ Establish a Sheppard AFB alumni network consisting of personnel and students formerly stationed at SAFB.
 - ♦ Create a database of personnel/students stationed at SAFB with the assistance of military and civilian support organizations. This database could be integrated into the database of former residents.
 - ♦ Area leaders should publicize the alumni network at official events and receptions on the base. For instance, the BCI should invite personnel to

Veterans Possess Many Characteristics that Appeal to Employers

- Demonstrated leadership and managerial skills
- Training to industry standards
- The ability to adapt quickly to change
- Knowledge of advanced technologies
- Experience working effectively under extreme pressure
- Education and professional certification credentials
- Strong work ethic
- Experience working within and/or leading diverse teams
- Effective written and verbal communications skills
- Security clearances
- History of accepting and following orders from superiors

join the network during presentations to new and departing personnel and students.

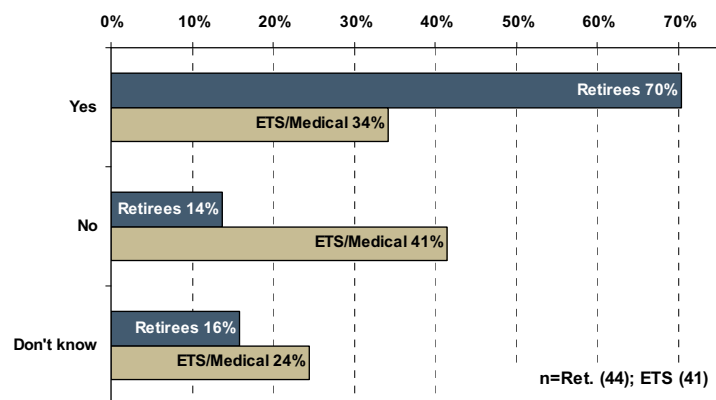
- ♦ The network should be informed of opportunities and current events in the region via the quarterly newsletter targeted to former residents.

2. **Initiate and maintain a Sheppard Air Force Base (SAFB) veterans inventory.** Results and analysis of the pilot surveys can be found in *Appendix B*. Some examples are provided in the left margin on the following two pages.

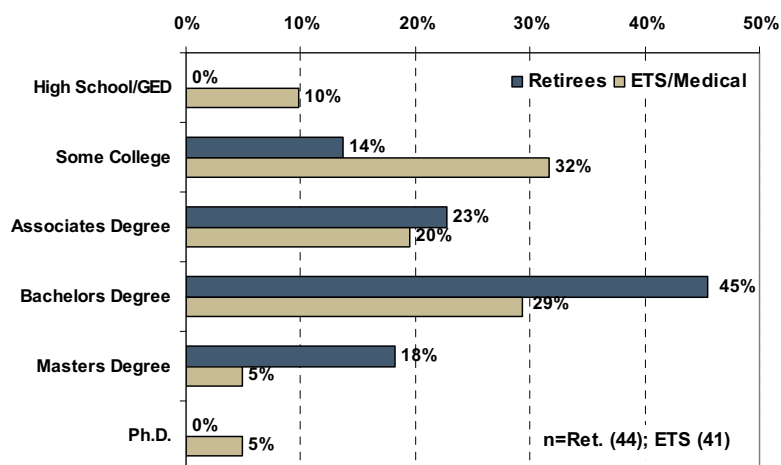
- Obtain the commitment from area organizations to participate in the SAFB veterans inventory initiative. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) should be drafted and signed by the Wichita Falls BCI, the Sheppard Military Affairs Committee (SMAC), Workforce Solutions North Texas, and the Airmen & Family Readiness Flight at SAFB that defines the roles and responsibilities each organization should assume in the inventory initiative. Each organization has a specific role to play in order to ensure its success and effectiveness. Other organizations, such as a local veterans organization, can be included in the consortium. Recommended roles for each organization include:

- ♦ Depending upon available resources, BCI, Workforce Solutions North Texas, or SMAC staff should tabulate survey results, perform appropriate analysis of the survey results, design data charts/graphs as needed to effectively describe the data, and maintain the survey database.
- ♦ The BCI should utilize the data and analysis in effective marketing campaigns and business recruitment activities. It should also provide regular suggestions regarding changes to the survey instrument and process for collecting the data.
- ♦ The Airmen & Family Readiness Flight should provide the staff and technical support needed to administer the surveys. The organization should also regularly assess the effectiveness of the survey process and questionnaire based on feedback from respondents and their own experiences.
- ♦ SMAC should contribute expertise to the analysis and interpretation of the survey results.

Q4. Would you stay in the region (within 30 miles) if desirable employment were available?



Q5. What is your highest level of education completed?



- ♦ Workforce Solutions North Texas should contribute its expertise to the analysis of the survey results, as well as needed administrative support for tabulating the results.

□ Administer a questionnaire to SAFB personnel attending the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) classes. In order to avoid interfering with existing equipment or staffing agreements, for at least the first year, the survey should be administered via an anonymous one-page paper questionnaire. During this period, the value of the information gleaned from surveys and the benefit to the service members themselves can be demonstrated to all interested parties, including the Airmen & Family Readiness Flight and the U.S. Air Force. After one year has elapsed, a process using a computer-based electronic survey should be considered.

- ♦ Initially, the survey results can be manually tabulated into a subscription web-based survey program such as SurveyMonkey or a more advanced purchased program such as Remark Office OMR 6. The results of the pilot surveys were manually entered by the consulting team into SurveyMonkey, which offers a professional subscription for \$19.95 a month for up to 1,000 survey responses, and 5¢ for each response above 1,000.
- ♦ However, the consulting team recommends the participating organizations purchase Remark Office 6 (\$895) or a similar program. Utilization of such a program would allow for survey forms to be scanned into a database using a typical office scanner rather than having to manually enter the data. The Remark program offers scan form templates that can be modified and coded to meet the needs of the surveys. For instance, this would allow for MOS codes to be included in the survey. The results can then either be cross-tabulated and analyzed in the Remark program or exported to a spreadsheet or relational database program.
- ♦ The raw results should be provided to the BCI, SMAC, the Airmen & Family Readiness Flight, and Workforce Solutions North Texas for their own analysis and use.
- ♦ The BCI should utilize the data in its targeted marketing and business recruitment activities.

- ♦ The parties to the MOU should periodically review the progress of the SAFB inventory program and make necessary changes/modifications to either process or instrument when needed.
- ♦ At an appropriate time, a proposal should be made to the U.S. Air Force requesting that the inventory program be formally incorporated into SAFB transition assistance program and the survey be administered via computer within the Airmen & Family Readiness Flight offices. An automated survey would make the inventory system more efficient and user-friendly.

3. Continue supporting educational excellence. Area leaders should continue striving for educational excellence in the region's public schools to ensure long-term economic vitality. This is critical not only for preparing current and future generations of the area's children to thrive in the modern economy, but also for making the region an attractive destination for new talent, families, and employers.

- ☐ Continue commitment to improve the facilities and performance of the school districts in the Wichita Falls region.
- ☐ Continue to support magnet programs in junior high and high schools.
- ☐ Develop more business/school partnerships, focused on providing resources for student performance (e.g., free laptops for top five percent of high school graduates) and participating in career fairs/days.

4. Align economic development and education programs – K-12, vocational, 2-yr, & 4-yr. Key partners to the region's economic efforts are educational institutions and workforce training providers. Employers must be assured access to trainable workers. At the same time, young adults, families with children, and even retirees are all drawn to locations offering access to continuing education opportunities.

- ☐ Work with regional higher education institutions (e.g., Vernon College) and area school districts to align vocational education and professional certification programs with BCI industry cluster development efforts.
- ☐ Establish internship/apprenticeship programs to aid in the transfer of vocational students to entry-level positions among existing industrial employers and/or targeted



Strive for educational excellence in K-12 education programs.

Generations in America

- **Veterans:** Born 1922 to 1945 - 75 million
- **Boomers:** Born 1946 to 1964 – 80 million
- **Gen. X:** Born 1965 to 1980 – 46 million
- **Gen. Y:** Born after 1980 – 76 million

Developing New Generations of Leaders

This is a challenge faced by communities across the nation. Many traditional social and volunteer organizations (e.g., Lions, Rotary, and Altrusa Club) are no longer popular among the X, Y, and millennial generations. Younger people often choose more informal social networks linked by common interests. Technology now allows people to network and engage in civic issues via the Internet. Moreover, younger families coping with the time demands of two-income households and longer commutes tend to have less time for community leadership and volunteer activities.

industries. This recommendation was identified and supported by the BCI's Workforce Development Task Force.

- ❑ Enhance and expand partnerships between area school districts and local higher education institutions, including programs such as developing institutes geared towards gaining vocational education and experience in specific target industries. Continue expanding local programs such as *Tech Prep* and *Dream It, Do It* that inform and promote the significance and attractiveness of modern technical careers.

5. **Develop new generations of leaders.** The most important ingredient of long-term community and economic growth is leadership. Perhaps no single proposal in this plan is more important to the lasting economic vitality of the region than a new initiative aimed at identifying, organizing, and preparing a new generation of regional leaders. A concern often expressed to the consulting team by many long-serving leaders is an apparent generational gap among the region's political, civic, and business leaders and volunteers. Most have been actively involved in the region's affairs for years or decades. They fear without a younger generation prepared and motivated to succeed them, these and other initiatives will fail over the long term.

The challenge for the Wichita Falls region is finding new and innovative ways for engaging younger people in civic affairs. However, the solutions will not be identified and designed by the region's existing cadre of leaders, but by the younger professionals they hope to engage.

- ❑ Create Next Generation Leadership Initiative.

Like hundreds of communities, Wichita Falls is currently served by a Leadership Wichita Falls organization. While programs such as this provide a valuable service to both participants and the community, there is a need to elevate the issue of generational leadership to a higher plane. The issue of long-term civic engagement by younger generations should be addressed at the community level. Most importantly, in order to succeed, this initiative must be organized and led by young people themselves.

- ♦ Form a Next Generation Task Force, similar in concept to the Workforce Task Force. The task force should be comprised of professionals and volunteers in their 20s and 30s from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. The purpose of the task force is twofold: (1) understand the primary barriers to this generation's civic engagement; and (2) design innovative methods of outreach and engagement.

Projected Population Change by Age Cohort

Percent Change, 2007-2012

Age Cohort	Wichita Falls MSA	Texas
0-4	-2%	10%
5-9	-2%	7%
10-14	0%	10%
15-19	-4%	7%
20-24	-8%	6%
25-34	4%	9%
35-44	-13%	1%
45-54	0%	11%
55-64	22%	26%
65-74	-2%	16%
75-84	4%	7%
85+	16%	18%
Total	0%	10%

SOURCE: ESRI

- The task force should conduct a needs assessment identifying issues and barriers to civic engagement by young adults in the community. The needs assessment should include a regional survey and focus groups to identify the primary issues and barriers to civic engagement.
- A young adult social network mapping initiative should also be a goal of the survey and focus groups. The idea is to map relationships between people, groups, and places in order to identify common interests, relationships, and locations for interaction. Once the nodes are identified, targeted strategies for engaging young adults can be designed.

- ☐ Continue to support the enhancement and expansion of existing programs that help identify and prepare young professional adults for future positions of leadership in Wichita Falls.
 - ♦ Consider a scholarship program for Leadership Wichita Falls targeting potential leaders in their 20s and 30s.
- ☐ Support BCI's efforts in developing target networking opportunities for professionals living and working in Wichita Falls.

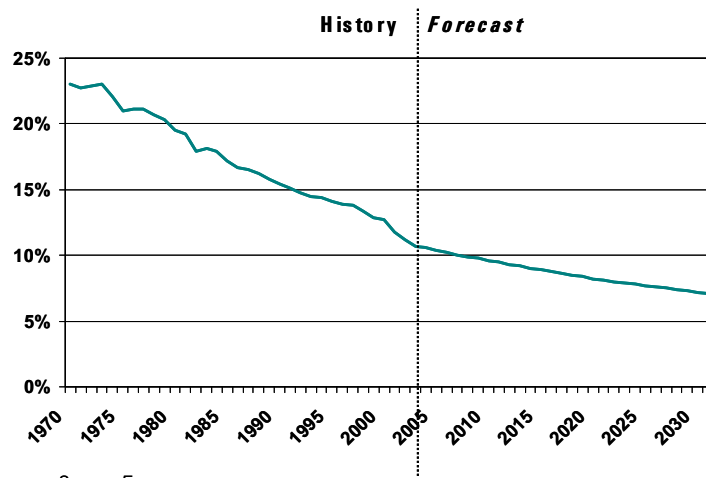
6. Continue efforts of Workforce Development Task Force. In an effort to strengthen and deepen the pool of skilled workers in the Wichita Falls region, BCI organized a 26-member Workforce Development Task Force in April 2007. Over the course of three months, the task force met six times to discuss various issues related to area workforce development. The group published its final 10 recommendations in June 2007.

- ☐ The Workforce Development Task Force should continue to meet regularly to monitor progress in implementing the initial 10 recommendations and to consider new ideas.
- ☐ The task force recognized that in order to implement the recommendations, BCI would need to hire a full-time workforce development professional. As a result, BCI has hired a Vice President of Workforce Development.

Priority Projects

- **RECRUITMENT OF EMERGING SECTORS**
- **HEALTHCARE CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT**
- **ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Manufacturing as a Percent of Total Jobs



Business Development

The U.S. manufacturing industry continues to transform the practice of economic development with profound effects. It is forcing us to rethink what is meant by a primary job, how we measure economic impact, and how we design incentives. This is, in large part, because manufacturing employment continues to decline. Most American communities have come to accept that it is no longer feasible to build a successful economic strategy based solely on manufacturing jobs. In Wichita Falls, this shift in strategy is further reinforced by the recent closures of the Delphi plant and the recently announced closure of the Saint Gobain-Vetrotex plant.

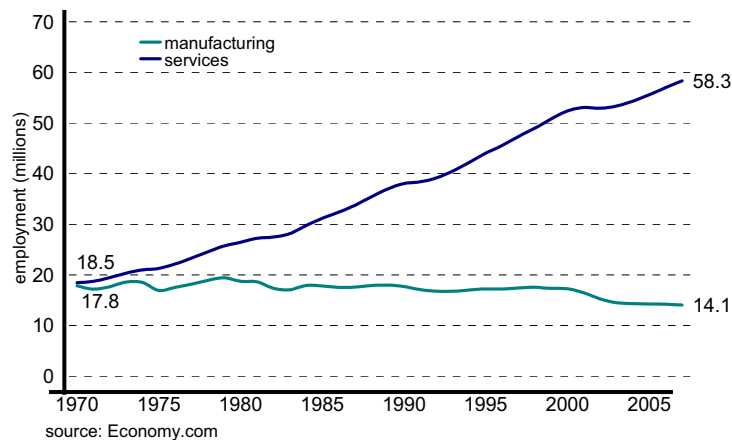
For this reason, our assessment of industry considers the full complement of economic activities — ranging from traditional industrial employers to healthcare to entrepreneurship — as well as the physical infrastructure (business parks, office space, transportation, etc.) and business climate to support those activities. Understanding the role of innovation, the opportunities for expansion of existing companies, the potential of entrepreneurship, and the importance of the service sector are important building blocks of an economic development plan.

OPPORTUNITY

This is not to say Wichita Falls does not have viable options for attracting industrial employers to the region. The region has a strong history of attracting and nurturing a healthy manufacturing base. It is home to a skilled and experienced workforce and it offers prospective employers available land, buildings, incentives, workforce training programs, and a business friendly environment.

However, despite these assets, the Wichita Falls region faces a sobering reality: it is engaged in a global competition with communities and regions that can offer cheaper wages, land, buildings, and taxes to attract a shrinking pool of traditional manufacturing jobs. To sustain long-term vitality, the region must focus its industrial recruitment efforts on emerging sectors emphasizing innovation. It must place a high priority on enhancing the region's high value service sector, including the healthcare and professional services. It must encourage and support the development of growth-oriented entrepreneurship.

U.S. Employment Growth, 1970-2007



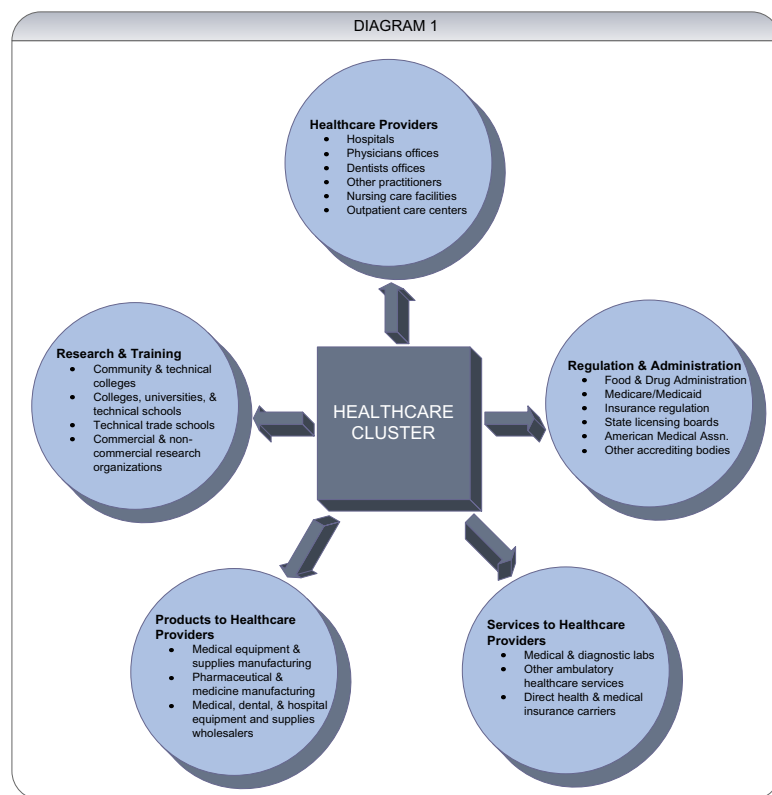
STRATEGIES

1. **Expand Healthcare Cluster.** Access to healthcare, both primary care and emergency care, is viewed as both a quality of life issue for residents and an economic issue for communities. With the continued loss of manufacturing jobs, once the most critical driver in local economic development, communities are becoming increasingly reliant on the healthcare industry as a source of employment and tax revenue. In addition, the presence of healthcare facilities is seen as key in location decisions for most industries. Finally, healthcare includes many occupations offering relatively high wages and abundant career-ladder opportunities.

Growth in the U.S. healthcare sector is largely driven by two major factors: population growth and an aging population. As the baby boomer generation approaches retirement age, a larger share of all consumer spending in the nation is being spent on healthcare related expenses. At the same time the sector is growing rapidly nationwide, the sector is facing talent shortages in key occupations such as nursing, physicians (particularly in rural areas), and some types of therapists.

Wichita Falls has a well-established healthcare sector facing similar national trends. In particular, the sector is facing a talent shortage in key occupations, which can impact the quality of care and the condition of the sector. In order to strengthen the existing sector, the consultants recommend implementing the following strategies:

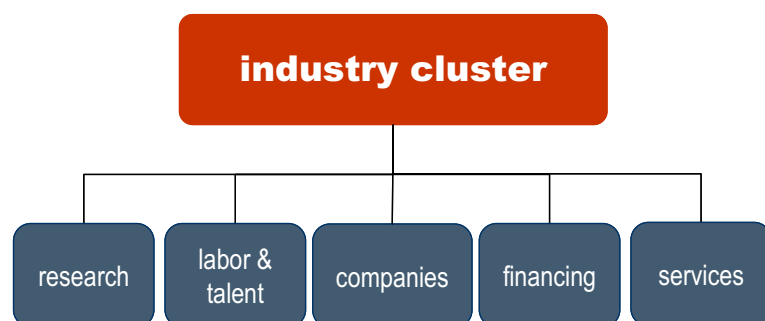
- Establish a healthcare industry cluster team. To develop this cluster, the consultants recommend the creation of a team composed of local healthcare leaders, government officials, educators, and technical experts to guide the implementation process. Once this implementation team is formed, its members will evaluate the following recommendations and set an implementation schedule:
 - ◆ Strengthen the area's healthcare wages, workforce, and educational programs. The long-term viability of a cluster strategy is dependent on competitive wages and access to an educated and trainable workforce. Programs linked to healthcare education should be supported throughout the region's public school systems, Midwestern State University, and Vernon College.
 - ◆ Conduct a regional needs assessment to determine healthcare services in greatest demand & identify specific niches for further development.





- ♦ Encourage local healthcare providers to collaborate and partner in healthcare education, workforce training, and talent attraction and recruitment efforts. Community-wide workforce development and training efforts have more credibility and leverage when all major healthcare interests are involved. It results in more workers entering healthcare fields and more staying in healthcare. It is an inefficient and counterproductive use of resources for local healthcare employers to compete with each other for a limited pool of workers.
- ❑ Grow healthcare workforce locally. It is always more efficient and cost-effective to grow your own talent rather than importing it from the outside. Links to organizations providing best practices in local healthcare workforce development include:
 - ♦ The Center for Health Workforce Development in Tennessee (www.healthworkforce.org/guide/toolkit_sec3_1.htm)
 - ♦ The Public Health Foundation (www.phf.org/Link/RR-Strategies.htm)
 - ♦ The Greater Dallas Chamber, DFW Regional Healthcare Cluster (<http://www.dallaschamber.org/healthcare/>)

2. Enhance Professional Services cluster.

- ❑ Position the Wichita Falls region as a location for Shared Service Centers through targeted marketing and recruitment efforts.
- ❑ Capitalize on the existing surplus of office space within the downtown through the recruitment, expansion, and startup of professional and business service firms, including energy, financial, legal, accounting, and IT services.
- ❑ Establish a one-stop Entrepreneurship Center (*See Strategy 5 below*).
- ❑ Establish an entrepreneurship program to facilitate new business startups in Wichita Falls (*See Strategy 5 below*).
- ❑ Leverage existing professional networks present in Wichita Falls.



3. Continue the development of industry clusters in the region.

ASSET	SECTOR	NICHE(S)
 Alcoa Howmet  ADVANCED MATERIALS	AEROSPACE & AVIATION	avionics aircraft engines & parts
   Food Packaging Systems	ADVANCED MATERIALS	composites
 ADVANCED MATERIALS	BUILDING MATERIAL & SYSTEMS	integrated building systems
EXISTING ENERGY SECTOR TURBINE MANUFACTURING MESA POWER WIND PROJECT	ALTERNATIVE ENERGY	wind generation equipment
AFFORDABLE OFFICE SPACE DILLARD COLLEGE @ MSU	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	shared service centers

□ Continue efforts to recruit primary employers in existing target industries. The BCI has already identified industries within the manufacturing and service sectors as appropriate target industries for the Wichita Falls region. Current BCI targets include:

- ◆ Aerospace and Defense
- ◆ Turbine Component Manufacturing
- ◆ Food Processing
- ◆ In-Bound Call Centers
- ◆ Alternative energy

□ Expand target industries. The consulting team recommends BCI expand its target sectors list to include the sectors and industry niches displayed in the adjacent table. We believe these targets represent the best (both long- and short-term) opportunities for the BCI's economic development efforts. We believe these represent the best opportunities for business startup, retention, expansion, and attraction activities. These sectors are selected for their ability to serve a dual purpose: 1) to bolster and diversify the regional economy over the short-term by taking advantage of existing assets and 2) to provide a pathway to sustained economic vitality over the long-term. A description of these industry sectors and the rationale for pursuing them can be found in the Target Industry Analysis located in *Appendix A*.

- ◆ Aerospace & Aviation
 - Aircraft engines & parts
 - Avionics
- ◆ Building Materials and Systems
 - Integrated building systems

- ♦ Advanced Materials
 - Composites
- ♦ Alternative Energy
 - Wind generation equipment
- ♦ Professional Services
 - Shared service centers

4. Continue business retention and expansion activities.

- ☐ Maintain an inventory of existing business to 1) ensure an understanding of types of businesses in the community and 2) keep tabs on expansions and layoffs.
- ☐ Call on existing employers periodically to 1) achieve a better understanding of their ongoing challenges and to 2) uncover potential opportunities for local expansions.
- ☐ Act as a liaison between area workforce development providers and local businesses to ensure their awareness of area resources and communicate the needs of Wichita Falls employers to Workforce Solutions North Texas.
- ☐ Work with area taxing jurisdictions to coordinate formal incentives policies targeted toward local businesses as well as outside prospects.
- ☐ Make sure local businesses and industries remain aware of any technical and financial assistance programs.

5. Promote entrepreneurship in the region.

- ☐ Facilitate the creation of a one-stop Entrepreneurship Center to foster the development of new high-growth businesses in Wichita Falls. This center should be a joint venture between Midwestern State University's Lalani Center for Entrepreneurship and Free Enterprise, the Small Business Development Center, Vernon College, the Board of Commerce and Industry, and the City of Wichita Falls. This will ensure coordination and continuity of services to minimize duplication of services. The center should provide:

en·tre·pre·neur
(*ön'trə-prə-nûr', -nööör'*) n.

A person who organizes, operates, and assumes the risk for a business venture.

French, from *entreprendre*, to undertake.

SOURCE: American Heritage Dictionary.

Asset Category	Existing	Gaps
Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local banks Informal Angel Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community-based Revolving Loan Fund Formal Angel Network Financial Literacy Training
Business Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal Accounting Marketing Human Resources Information Technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None found
Education & Information Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops One-on-one Counseling Networking Opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entrepreneur Boot Camp Youth Entrepreneurship Education Program Mentor Network One-Stop Shop

- ♦ Access to information resources and databases to provide entrepreneurs with knowledge of resources available (financing, business services, educational opportunities) to them as well as competitive information.
- ♦ Personalized technical assistance for both existing and new businesses.
- ♦ Continuing education geared towards entrepreneurs on topics such as starting a business, basic and advanced financial management, accessing capital, marketing on a shoe-string, legal issues, and human resource management. In addition, formal entrepreneurship “boot camps” should also be offered.
- ♦ Graduate-level business administration courses to support professionals downtown.
- ♦ Succession planning and business transfer services to help aging and retiring business owners find successors for their businesses.
- ♦ Access to a mentor network and angel investor network.
- ♦ In addition, the center could provide affordable, high quality space with shared administrative services. If pursued, pricing for this incubator space should be structured to encourage “graduation” to market rate office space within a specified period of time. This space should also be reserved for high-growth entrepreneurs rather than business owners and the self-employed.

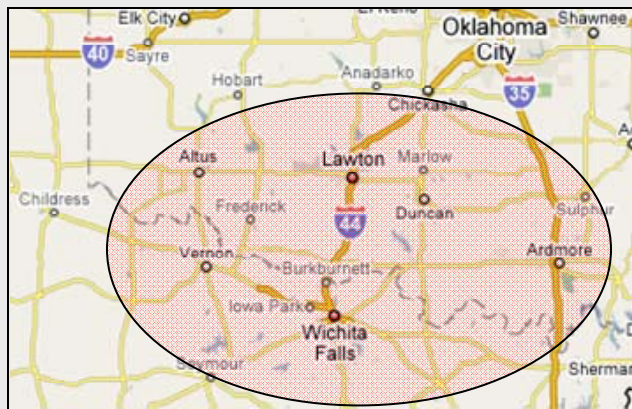
- Enhance services for entrepreneurs to augment the community’s entrepreneurial assets. This will strengthen the entrepreneurial climate in Wichita Falls as well as the region. The figure to the left presents the gaps in assets identified in the entrepreneurship assessment conducted by the consulting team (*See Appendix C*).

Training Curricula

One popular entrepreneurial training program is **FastTrac**. Founded by the Kauffman Foundation of Kansas City, Missouri, FastTrac is a boot camp for entrepreneurs. According to the foundation's materials, 70 percent of companies that go through the program succeed beyond three years – the oft-touted threshold by which the majority of small businesses fail. The program can be brought to any town provided there is an organization willing to become certified to teach the program. <http://www.fasttrac.org/>

Another popular program is **NxLevel**, a curriculum developed by the University of Colorado at Denver. NxLevel includes 7 different curriculum tailored for different types of entrepreneurs. Since 1996, over 80,000 students have participated in NxLevel trainings. A third-party evaluation of the program shows that over 90 percent of business start-ups that participated in the program were still in business after 3 years. The program is taught by certified trainers in over 600 communities in 48 states. <http://www.nxlevel.org/>

- ♦ Support for a formal angel investor network to aid entrepreneurs in raising seed capital by providing opportunities for entrepreneurs to present business plans and financing needs to an audience of local investors.
- ♦ Investigate the feasibility of creating a community-based revolving loan fund. A revolving loan fund, in which local financial institutions participate, would provide support for higher risk loans (start-ups & small) while spreading risk for the lenders.
- ♦ Sponsor financial literacy courses to educate entrepreneurs and business owners on the various types of financing mechanisms, the pros and cons of each, and best practices for using them.
- ♦ Offer entrepreneurship training courses such as FastTrac or NxLevel that provide intensive training for potential entrepreneurs.
- ♦ Support the creation of a youth entrepreneurship education program in Wichita Falls ISD public schools.
- ♦ Develop a mentor network to match “green” entrepreneurs with experienced entrepreneurs.
- ♦ Create a clearinghouse of information on services available in the community. Include a description of services and contact information for:
 - Business services: accounting, legal, human resources, information technology, business transfer planning, production, marketing, market research.
 - Financing services: microlenders, local banks, national banks, factors, angel investor networks.
- Actively promote entrepreneurship in the community by lowering barriers of entry and raising awareness of successful entrepreneurs.
- ♦ Extend the incentives policy to support entrepreneurs as well. Consider structuring an incentives tool specifically targeted toward entrepreneurs.



The Texoma / Red River Valley

Best Practice: Regionalism *Texoma Regional Consortium*

In 2006, the Texoma Workforce Development Board and the Southern Oklahoma Workforce Investment Board came together to form the **Texoma Regional Consortium** (TRC). Recognizing that both sides of the Red River face many of the economic challenges, the goal of the TRC is to craft a regional economic strategy that will help the region transition to a more knowledge-based economy.

Through the strategic planning process, the TRC has established a common vision, framed the key workforce and economic development issues, and developed strategies to address these issues.

For more information:

<http://www.workforcetexoma.com/news/news.cfm?newsID=24>

- ♦ Explore the possibility of creating a private purchasing cooperative to reduce the cost of health insurance for small employers participating in the group. Texas law allows two or more employers to form a non-profit private cooperative for the purchase of small or large employer health benefit plans.
- ♦ Organize an annual business plan contest to identify promising entrepreneurial ventures in the community. Reward the contest winner a grant to help defray start-up costs.

- ☐ Celebrate and support entrepreneurship in region through a public relations campaign profiling area entrepreneurs ("success stories") – current and past – and informs residents of entrepreneurial activity and initiatives. This will help foster an entrepreneurial spirit and a community that values entrepreneurship.

6. Foster regionalism.

- ☐ Explore co-marketing opportunities with other communities in the Texoma/Red River Valley - target industries, talent attraction, tourism promotion.
- ☐ Identify and support regional industry clusters.
- ☐ Consider expanding local workforce development initiative to a regional level.
- ☐ Monitor transportation issues that will impact regional mobility. For example, traffic flows in Decatur have significant implications on the connectivity between the Wichita Falls region and the Metroplex.

7. Continue to pursue new missions for SAFB. While not fatal, the 2005 BRAC Commission will result in real personnel and economic losses for both the base and the region. The realignment of the basic enlisted medical training mission to Fort Sam Houston will be especially painful. Therefore, in order to compensate for these losses and to mitigate against any future BRAC related losses, the region should continue pursuing new missions for SAFB. The organization best positioned to lead the community efforts to pursue new missions is the Sheppard Military Affairs Committee (SMAC).

- ☐ Continue enlisting local and regional support for the Sheppard Military Affairs Committee.



- ☐ Broaden the financial support for the Sheppard Military Affairs Committee.
 - ◆ Expand base of financial support by seeking corporate sponsorships.
- ☐ Fully leverage membership in the Association of Defense Communities (ADC).
 - ◆ Have at least one community representative attend ADC winter and summer conferences in order to stay informed on current and future military installation-community issues. ADC conferences also present a unique opportunity for local officials to network with representatives of the Department of Defense, other defense impacted communities, as well as private sector specialists.

8. Encourage growth in the tourism sector.

- ☐ Develop “tourism products” to showcase Wichita Falls’ unique assets and attract visitors to the city. These products could include:
 - ◆ the proposed museum district (*see Downtown Master Plan, Urban Design, Districts, & Open Space section*)
 - ◆ the Depot Square Historic District (*see Downtown Master Plan, Urban Design, Districts, & Open Space section*)
 - ◆ the Wichita River and its trail system (*see Local Update, Zoning Policies section*)
 - ◆ Lake Wichita (*see Local Update, Parks and Recreation Plan*)
 - ◆ Special events such as concerts, hockey games, festivals, and cycling rides
- ☐ Design a well-coordinated effort to promote tourism by convening the CVB, BCI, DWFD, and other stakeholders.
- ☐ Market Wichita Falls and its tourism products to patrons of the casinos situated north of the Red River.
- ☐ Continue to pursue state and regional conventions.

Priority Projects

- **COMPREHENSIVE MARKETING & IMAGE STUDY**
- **LOCAL POSITIVE ATTITUDE CAMPAIGN**

Image and Marketing

A regional challenge mentioned frequently to the consulting team during interviews and focus groups is the need to improve the community's image - both externally and internally. Many local professionals not originally from the area anecdotally admit they were reluctant to relocate to Wichita Falls because of the area's perception as a sleepy, remote city with few amenities and scorching summers. Yet, most of these same individuals also acknowledge how inaccurate and uninformed this image turned out to be. After spending time in Wichita Falls, they developed a very deep affinity for the community and the people.

Many feel the area also suffers from a poor image locally. They claim too often residents dwell on the challenges facing the area and don't accentuate its positives. This is in large part due to a lack of awareness regarding local events and activities.

OPPORTUNITY

The primary purpose of traditional economic development marketing is to generate interest from companies with expansion or relocation plans. BCI already does a quality job of marketing the region to industry decision-makers and site location consultants, especially those representing target industries. It is managed by an experienced and highly regarded team of economic development and marketing professionals.

However, given the current environment in which more and more workers are selecting place first and job second, Wichita Falls would benefit from a marketing campaign designed to attract new residents to the region, as well as to reinforce a positive image of Wichita Falls among existing residents.

STRATEGIES

1. **Commission a community-wide marketing and image plan.** The first step in designing a comprehensive marketing plan is to develop an understanding of how Wichita Falls is viewed from both within and outside the area and to build consensus for a primary theme/message to market Wichita Falls.
 - ☐ Regional partners, led by BCI, should call upon talents of a professional marketing consultant to assist with aspects of an overall image and marketing plan for the Wichita Falls region.



WICHITA FALLS
BOARD OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY



Considerations of the study could include:

- ♦ The image and perception of Wichita Falls among former residents and graduates of MSU.
- ♦ The image of Wichita Falls within the region.
- ♦ The most effective methods and tools for communicating the region's message to its target audiences.
- ♦ Determination of the merits of presenting a coordinated community marketing message of major stakeholders including, BCI, the City of Wichita Falls, the CVB, Downtown Wichita Falls Development, SAFB, and MSU.
- ♦ The development of a common website that could act as a portal and provide a unified marketing vehicle for the City of Wichita Falls, BCI, Downtown Wichita Falls Development and the CVB.
- ♦ If a common message is developed, it should be used consistently in all materials. Elements to support this theme include a logo, Web site, prospect folder, specific industry profiles, and a press packet for both internal and external uses.

- ☐ Use the information from this plan to inform talent attraction, target recruitment, and internal marketing efforts.
- ☐ Hold regular meetings with regional partners to coordinate efforts and to share co-marketing opportunities, best practices, and innovative marketing ideas.

2. Designate an individual to manage the city-wide marketing campaign. To run an effective marketing campaign, the City must have a person devoted to implementing the marketing plans and coordinating the efforts of the various entities that market Wichita Falls.

- ☐ Hire a marketing coordinator.
 - ♦ This position should be under the umbrella of the City of Wichita Falls and should be responsible for implementing recommendations from the comprehensive marketing plan, designing internal and external marketing

Viral Marketing

Viral marketing builds on the time-honored word-of-mouth strategy. It does this by accessing the network potential of the Web. Viral marketing describes any strategy that encourages individuals to forward a marketing message to others, creating the potential for exponential growth in the message's exposure and influence. Essentially, the goal of viral marketing is to create a buzz; the "viral" analogy refers to the buzz spreading like an infection.

plans, implementing the plans, and tracking the results. In addition, this individual should coordinate the various campaigns – downtown revitalization, entrepreneurship promotion, economic development, talent attraction, tourism promotion, internal marketing, and positive image campaign – to ensure that a consistent message is expressed and that co-marketing opportunities are leveraged to the full extent.

3. **Initiate a local positive image campaign.** One of the most important targets of any marketing effort should be the people and businesses already in the community. They are the ones who have already made an investment in the area and they represent Wichita Falls on a daily basis. Making sure existing residents and local business leaders have a positive image of their community is critical to the success of any external campaign, as these are the people who can best tell the Wichita Falls story to the outside world.

- Building on the findings of the image and marketing study, regional partners should develop and implement an *internal* marketing effort designed to promote a positive image of Wichita Falls among residents and build awareness regarding current economic and community development initiatives. This effort should promote a positive image not only to local residents, but those living throughout the wider Texoma/Red River Valley.

Some cost effective initiatives that can be utilized to market the region internally include:

- ♦ Developing a single community-wide "calendar of events" similar to the one hosted by the CVB on its website. This would allow various community organizations to manually update their events on the calendar and display it on their own websites.
- ♦ The regional partners should work with the local media, including both print and broadcast media, to promote positive stories about the community. Something as simple as highlighting local business achievements or including human interest stories can help create a positive image of the community for local residents.
- ♦ Develop a "speakers bureau" of professionals who are available to speak at community meetings and promote local initiatives.

4. **Continue to build awareness of the region among decision-makers in target industries and site selectors.** As in any successful marketing initiative, economic development campaigns must be focused on clearly defined targets. The primary audiences for the Wichita Falls region's business recruitment marketing efforts are: 1) regional business leaders that can influence business location decisions, 2) key allies, such as state and regional economic development organizations and institutions of higher education, 3) members of the media, 4) site location consultants, and 5) decision-makers at companies within the target industries. As mentioned earlier, BCI has done an excellent job leading Wichita Falls business recruitment marketing efforts.

- ☐ Identify key industry associations for each target.
- ☐ Create and maintain a database of regional and national companies for each target.
- ☐ Develop local intelligence and expertise for each target.
- ☐ Design marketing material and initial direct mail programs for each target.
- ☐ Participate in industry trade events.
- ☐ Maintain a database of site consultants.
- ☐ Hold a "developer's day" in Wichita Falls for site consultants and regional industrial and commercial brokers.

5. **Maximize the impression of Wichita Falls to visitors.**

- ☐ Re-evaluate the current Hotter'n Hell Hundred route and look for alternative paths that accentuate the most attractive areas of the city. With over 10,000 riders every year, most of whom reside outside the region, the Hotter'n Hell Hundred is the community's best opportunity to showcase its finest features to outside visitors. However, the current route takes riders through some of the most disadvantaged and unattractive parts of the city. While recognizing there are many factors that influence the race route, including traffic flow and safety, the consulting team recommends race organizers and community officials evaluate if a more visually appealing route can be devised.
- ☐ The CVB should purchase a portable information kiosk (similar to those found in national chain hotel lobbies) that provides interactive tourist information, restaurant



and entertainment options, and transportation directions. The kiosk should function as a mobile information center and set-up at various community events (e.g., Hotter'n Hell, Texas-Oklahoma Golf Tournament, FallsFest, etc.).

6. **Continue city-wide beautification initiatives.** To instill citizen and business pride in the community, the City should continue its efforts to improve Wichita Falls' physical appearance. The image the area portrays to outsiders as well as existing residents plays an important role in how the community is perceived.

Focal points for these efforts should include major arterials and gateways. Their appearance is inextricably linked with perceptions of Wichita Falls itself. Gateways and transportation corridors form the primary visual medium through which the community's image is presented to both residents and out-of-towners alike. In addition, gateways and arterials offer some of the best opportunities for newer developments.



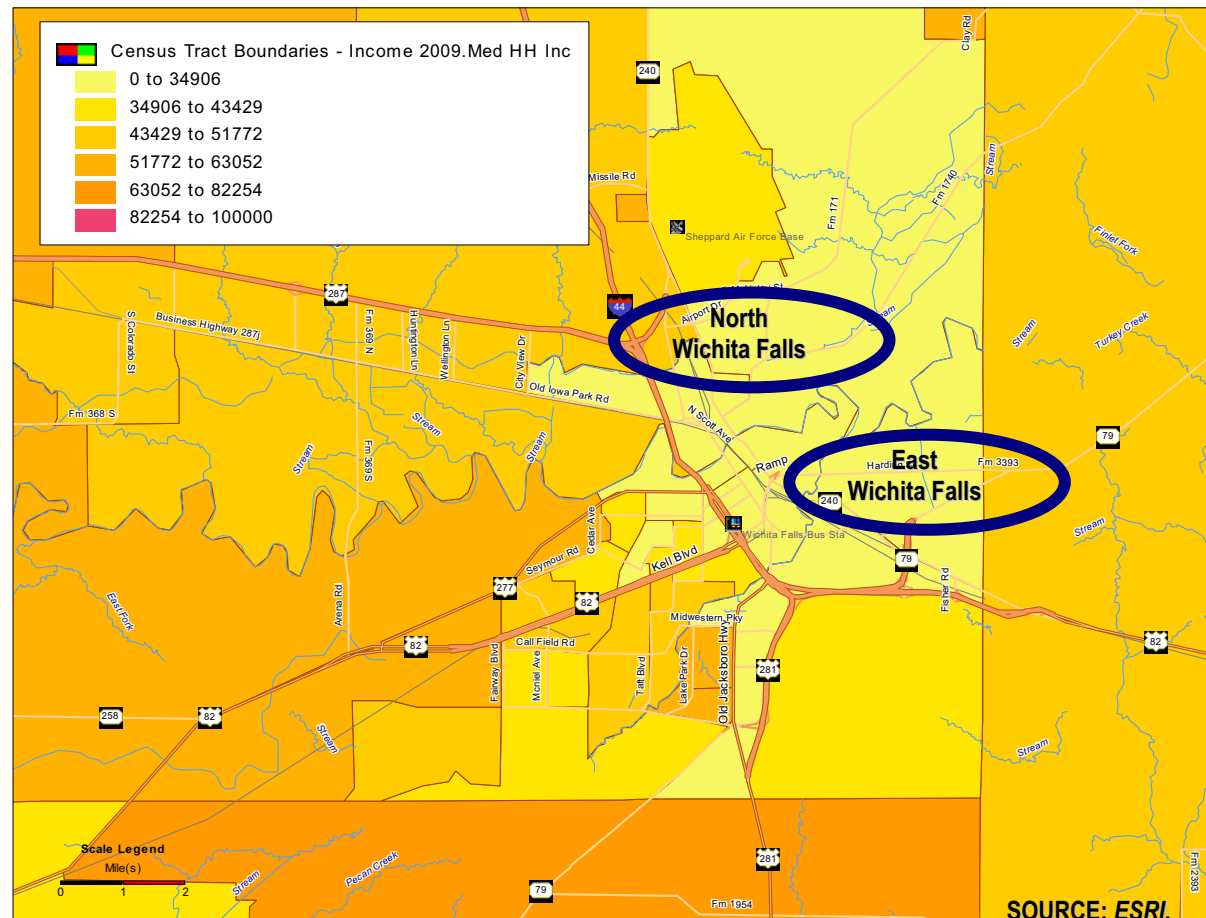
- ☐ Continue median beautification efforts. The City of Wichita Falls has initiated and managed an ambitious median beautification effort. Parks Maintenance Division has landscaped over 50 miles of medians and highway interchange areas. These efforts have included flowerbeds, trees, and ornamental structures. These efforts should be expanded to include gateway and corridor areas between the municipal airport and the downtown.
- ☐ Expand the profile and impact of the "Wichita Falls Clean Country Registry" program. This is the local affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, Inc., a national volunteer-based organization dedicated to engaging individuals to improve the environment in their community. At a minimum, the City of Wichita should elevate the profile of Wichita Falls Clean Country program on its website to provide information about activities and successes and to generate additional interest.
- ☐ Enhance connections with the Wichita River and trail system. The City of Wichita Falls should continue to support the River Development District (RDD), extend the trail system adjacent to the river, and develop stronger connectivity and access standards. In addition, signage for cyclists and pedestrians should be expanded, and connections to the convention center and downtown should be formalized. Finally, the theme established by the Wee-chi-tah sculptures should be carried along other areas of the river.

Priority Projects

- GATEWAY PROJECT
- DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Special Areas

As part of this plan, the consulting team was asked to evaluate the economic opportunity for two “Special Areas” - the area of North Wichita Falls near Sheppard Air Force Base and East Wichita Falls. Both are areas of the city that have experienced the type of underinvestment typical of historically low income areas and have experienced depopulation as residents move to more desirable parts of the city.



NORTH WICHITA FALLS

North Wichita Falls is adjacent to the main gate of SAFB and has a very strong connection to the base. It has apartments catering to military and military-related tenants along with retail serving the base. However, the quality of the development in this area adjacent to the base is not of the caliber the City or base administration would like to see remain long-term. In addition, the base administration expressed some concern about the proximity of development to the Main Gate and the lack of a buffer between this development and the base.

OPPORTUNITY

For North Wichita Falls, reinforcing the ties between this area and SAFB represents the greatest opportunity. This can be achieved by improving the quality of development and offering much-needed services to the base. In this way, North Wichita Falls can become a gateway into SAFB portraying a more positive image of the City and strengthening the connections between the City and the base.

STRATEGIES

1. Support a “Gateway” project near the north gate of Sheppard Air Force Base

- ❑ This project should be a high quality mixed-use development enhancing the image of the area while providing much needed services to the base, including:
 - ♦ Primary-care focused medical offices to provide services to military employees and trainees.
 - ♦ Housing for military staff who choose to live in off-base (non-privatized) housing, for civilian staff who wish to live in close proximity to work, and for trainees' spouses who need short-term housing for the duration of the training program.
 - ♦ Higher-education offerings that would offer continuing education opportunities to military staff as well as the greater Wichita Falls community
 - ♦ Retail/Restaurant/Entertainment options to provide appropriate entertainment options or gathering places for airmen off-base but in close proximity. This would provide an alternative to the convenience store



A “Gateway” project could enhance the area’s image and provide much-needed services for the base.

across the street from the Main Gate that currently serves as a gathering place.



Railroad tracks between downtown & East Wichita Falls



Typical blocks in East Wichita Falls

Source: Microsoft Live Maps.

- ❑ Encourage the creation of a public/private partnership to assemble land as well as design and build the project.
 - ◆ This partnership could be structured to involve either Sheppard or the City as the public entity.
- ❑ Consider structuring an incentives package to induce the desired development. Such incentives could include:
 - ◆ A performance-based 380 agreement that would help stimulate retail development while increasing the City's tax revenues.
 - ◆ Infrastructure financing
 - ◆ Landscape design and/or maintenance

EAST WICHITA FALLS

East Wichita Falls is adjacent to downtown. With the transfer of the city center to the commercial area around Sikes Senter Mall, East Wichita Falls is now in the outer periphery of the city. It is also physically isolated from the rest of the city by a series of eight railroad tracks. Furthermore, it lies in the flood plain of the Wichita River and was deeply impacted by a flood in June and July 2007. The aerial photos in the adjacent figure provide snapshots of two challenges facing the area: the physical barrier of the railroad tracks and the lack of density in the neighborhood.

OPPORTUNITY

In East Wichita Falls, economic development opportunities for the area are currently limited due to the area's geographic isolation, low density, and lack of investment. Under the present conditions of the area, the City should focus its efforts on community development in order to build assets and create the conditions necessary for economic development initiatives in the future.

In addition, successful downtown revitalization will have highest benefit for East Wichita Falls by attracting investment, residents and visitors to downtown. This heightened activity in the downtown area will likely spillover to surrounding areas. Thus, the City should also prioritize downtown revitalization as a primary strategy to revitalize East Wichita Falls. As such, the City should

structure its initiatives in East Wichita Falls in a way not directly competing with downtown revitalization efforts, especially in terms of funding.

STRATEGIES

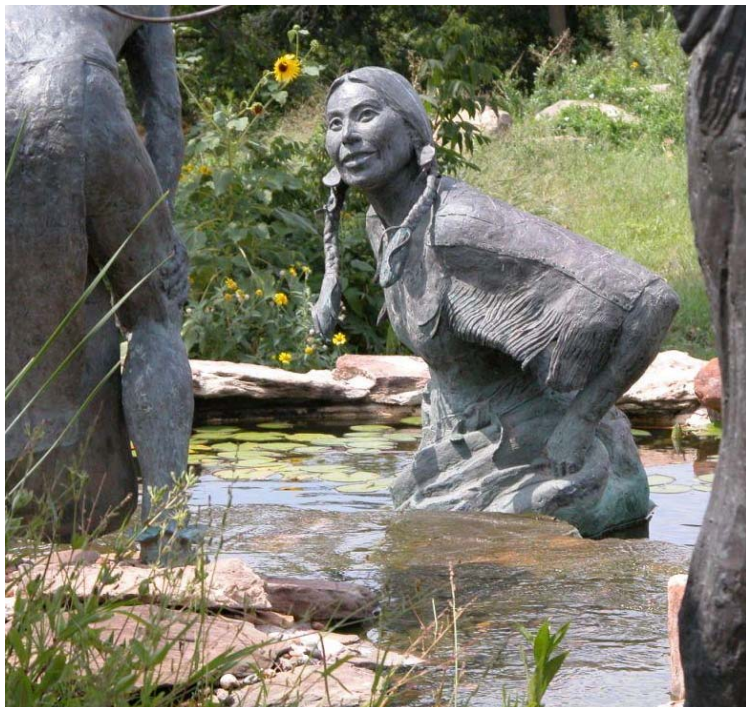
1. Support revitalization of East Wichita Falls

- ☐ Advocate for and actively support downtown revitalization.
- ☐ Strengthen the connection between downtown and East Wichita Falls.
 - ◆ Position East Wichita Falls as the destination for any larger retailers such as grocery stores and pharmacies needed to support residents in downtown and East Wichita Falls.
- ☐ Continue to secure available funding designated for community improvements in low to moderate income areas from state and federal sources.
- ☐ Continue infill housing program & land banking to promote redevelopment of blighted areas and increased density.
 - ◆ Use available land to encourage commercial development to the extent possible.
- ☐ Collaborate closely with the non-profit community in East Wichita Falls to ensure the area's needs are being met and duplication of services is minimized.

Washington Village



This adaptive re-use project will create the neighborhood's first mixed-use development.



IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Implementation Guide

The following guide outlines potential partners and allies as well as a recommended time horizon for implementation. In addition, for each opportunity, the consulting team estimated any new expenditures that might be associated with the strategies and actions. However, the majority of the strategies and actions can be implemented at current staffing levels and will require only a reprioritization of tasks.

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS		TIMELINE				
Description	Regional Partner(s)	0-6 mos.	6-12 mos.	2-3 yrs.	3-5 yrs.	On-going
City – City of Wichita Falls; BCI – Board of Commerce and Industry; DWFD – Downtown Wichita Falls Development; CVB – Wichita Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau; WS – Workforce Solutions North Texas; MSU – Midwestern State University; VC – Vernon College; ISDs – Area School Districts; HC – Healthcare Industry Cluster Team; SAFB – Sheppard Air Force Base; SMAC – Sheppard Military Affairs Committee; DEV – Developers & Brokers; SBDC – Small Business Development Center; NPO – Non-Profit Organizations						
OPPORTUNITY: DOWNTOWN <u>Budget Summary</u> Marketing Included in comprehensive marketing effort Retail Recruitment Strategy (if contracted out) \$25,000 - \$30,000 Business workshops & seminars \$1,000 - \$10,000 Entrepreneurship Center Depends on size/design of physical center & programs offered.						
1	Formalize tools for promoting revitalization.					
	Secure funding sources.	City		X		
	Establish a formal incentives policy.	City, BCI, DWFD		X		
	Track growth and development.	DWFD				X
	Design and launch an effective marketing campaign.	City, BCI, CVB, DWFD			X	
2	Support the establishment of “anchors”.					
	Spread the anchors across the core of downtown.	City, BCI, DWFD				X

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Encourage the development of a flagship mixed-use project.	City				X	
3	Use residential development as a primary catalyst.					
Revise the city plan and zoning strategies to allow for greater densities for downtown residential development.	City		X			
Consider imposing a minimum number of units per acre for residential developments in the area.	City		X			
Use local government incentives to enable developments that produce residential density and conform to urban character standards.	City					X
Encourage residential developments that incorporate good urban character.	City					X
4	Develop a retail strategy emphasizing “destination” retail.					
Develop and implement a retail recruitment program.	City, DWFD		X			
Promote destination retail among the mix of uses in the flagship anchor project.	City, DWFD				X	
Encourage the concentration of retail in a defined district.	City, DWFD					X
Provide business workshops and seminars.	City, DWFD, BCI					X

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS		TIMELINE				
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5	Target professional services, company headquarters, and entrepreneurship					
Actively recruit professional services firms and company headquarters.	BCI, DWFD			X		
Facilitate the creation of a one-stop Entrepreneurship Center.	SBDC, BCI, MSU, DWFD, City		X			

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS		TIMELINE				
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	OPPORTUNITY: TALENT <u>Budget Summary</u> Marketing Veteran’s Inventory Included in comprehensive marketing effort \$250 - \$600, annually + staff time					
1	Reestablish ties to former residents.					
	Establish a marketing campaign urging former residents to “Come Home to Wichita Falls.”	BCI, MSU, VC, ISDs, City			X	
	Establish a SAFB alumni network.	SMAC; SAFB; BCI		X		
2	Initiate and maintain a Sheppard Air Force Base (SAFB) veterans inventory.					
	Obtain the commitment from area organizations to participate in the initiative.	BCI; WR; SAFB; SMAC	X			
	Administer a survey to SAFB personnel attending the TAP classes.	BCI; SMAC; WS; SAFB;				X
3	Continue supporting educational excellence.					
	Continue commitment to improve the facilities and performance of area school districts.	All				X
	Continue to support magnet programs in junior and senior highs.	All				X
	Develop more business/school partnerships.	BCI; WS;			X	

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS		TIMELINE				
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	ISDs; City					
4	Align economic development and education programs – K-12, vocational, 2-yr, & 4-yr.					
	Align area vocational education and professional certification programs with BCI industry cluster development efforts.	BCI; VC; ISDs			X	
	Establish internship/apprenticeship programs.	WS; ISDs		X		
	Enhance and expand partnerships between area school districts and local higher education institutions.	ISDs; MSU; VC		X		
5	Develop new generations of leaders.					
	Create Next Generation leadership Initiative.	All	X			
	Continue to support existing young professional development programs.	All				X
6	Continue efforts of Workforce Development Task Force.					
	Implement 10 recommendations and consider new ideas.	BCI; WS; MSU; VC; ISDs; City	X			X
	Hire a full-time workforce development professional. <i>(filled)</i>	BCI	✓			

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS		TIMELINE				
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OPPORTUNITY: BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT <u>Budget Summary</u> Regional Needs Assessment (if contracted out) \$60,000 - \$75,000 Entrepreneurship Center Depends on center design Entrepreneur PR Campaign Included in comprehensive marketing effort Regional co-marketing opportunities Included in comprehensive marketing effort Tourism promotion Included in comprehensive marketing effort						
1	Expand Healthcare cluster.					
	Establish healthcare industry cluster team.	HC; BCI; WS; MSU; VC, ISDs	X			
	Strengthen the area's healthcare workforce and educational programs.	HC; MSU; ISDs				X
	Conduct a regional needs assessment.	HC			X	
	Encourage local healthcare providers to collaborate and partner in healthcare education, workforce training, and talent attraction and recruitment efforts.	HC; WS; MSU' VC; ISDs;			X	
	Grow healthcare workforce locally.	HC; WS; MSU' VC' ISDs				X

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS		TIMELINE				
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2	Enhance Professional Services cluster.					
	Position the Wichita Falls region as a location for Shared Service Centers through targeted marketing and recruitment efforts.	BCI	X			X
	Capitalize on the existing surplus of office space within the downtown through the recruitment, expansion, and startup of professional and business service firms.	BCI; DEV; DWFD	X			X
3	Continue the development of industry clusters in the region.					
	Continue efforts to recruit primary employers in existing target industries.	BCI				X
	Expand target industries.	BCI	X			
4	Continue business retention and expansion activities.					
	Maintain an inventory of existing business.	BCI	X			X
	Call on existing employers on a periodic basis.	BCI	X			X
	Act as a liaison between area workforce development providers and local businesses.	BCI; WS	X			X
	Work with area taxing jurisdictions to coordinate formal incentives policies targeted toward local businesses as well as outside prospects.	BCI; City; WS	X			X
	Make sure that local businesses and industries remain aware of any technical and financial assistance programs that are available.	BCI; City; WS	X			X

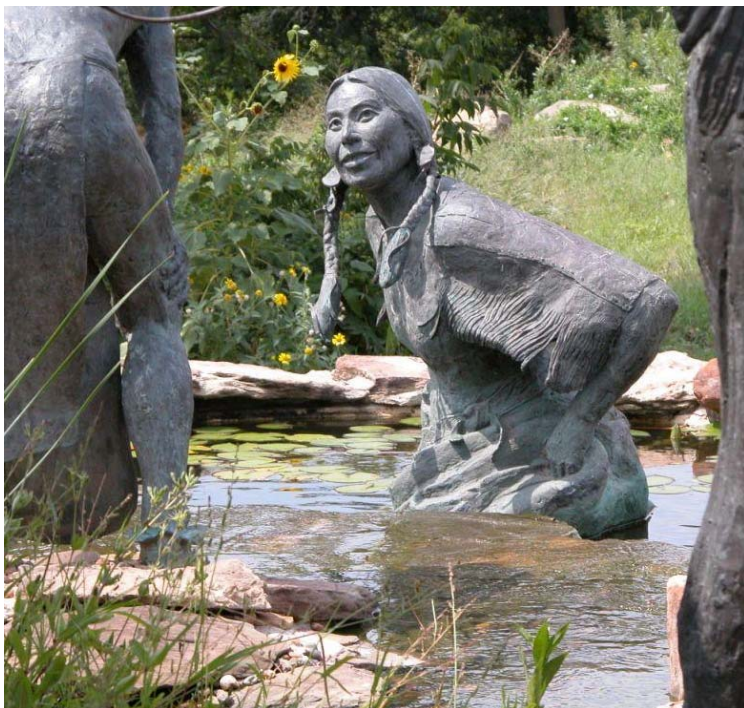
STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS			TIMELINE				
Description		Regional Partner(s)	0-6 mos.	6-12 mos.	2-3 yrs.	3-5 yrs.	On-going
City – City of Wichita Falls; BCI – Board of Commerce and Industry; DWFD – Downtown Wichita Falls Development; CVB – Wichita Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau; WS – Workforce Solutions North Texas; MSU – Midwestern State University; VC – Vernon College; ISDs – Area School Districts; HC – Healthcare Industry Cluster Team; SAFB – Sheppard Air Force Base; SMAC – Sheppard Military Affairs Committee; DEV – Developers & Brokers; SBDC – Small Business Development Center; NPO – Non-Profit Organizations							
5	Promote entrepreneurship in the region.						
	Facilitate the creation of a one-stop Entrepreneurship Center to foster the growth of new high-growth businesses in Wichita Falls.	SBDC, BCI, MSU, DWFD, City		X			
	Enhance services for entrepreneurs to augment the community's entrepreneurial assets.	SBDC, BCI, MSU, DWFD, City					X
	Actively promote entrepreneurship in the community by lowering barriers of entry and raising awareness of successful entrepreneurs.	City, BCI			X		
	Celebrate and support entrepreneurship in region through a public relations campaign.	All					X
6	Foster regionalism.						
	Explore co-marketing opportunities with other communities in the Texoma/Red River Valley.	BCI; CVB			X		
	Identify and support regional industry clusters.	BCI			X		
	Consider expanding local workforce development initiative to a regional level.	WS		X			
	Monitor transportation issues that will impact regional mobility.	WS		X			

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS		TIMELINE				
Description	Regional Partner(s)	0-6 mos.	6-12 mos.	2-3 yrs.	3-5 yrs.	On-going
City – City of Wichita Falls; BCI – Board of Commerce and Industry; DWFD – Downtown Wichita Falls Development; CVB – Wichita Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau; WS – Workforce Solutions North Texas; MSU – Midwestern State University; VC – Vernon College; ISDs – Area School Districts; HC – Healthcare Industry Cluster Team; SAFB – Sheppard Air Force Base; SMAC – Sheppard Military Affairs Committee; DEV – Developers & Brokers; SBDC – Small Business Development Center; NPO – Non-Profit Organizations						
7	Continue to pursue new missions for SAFB.					
	Continue enlisting local and regional support for the Sheppard Military Affairs Committee.	SMAC; BCI; City; SAFB	X			X
	Broaden the financial support for the Sheppard Military Affairs Committee.	SMAC; BCI	X			X
	Fully leverage membership in the Association of Defense Communities (ADC).	SMAC; City; BCI	X			
8	Encourage growth in the tourism sector.					
	Develop “tourism products” to showcase Wichita Falls’ unique assets and attract visitors to the city.	CVB, DWFD		X		
	Design a well-coordinated effort to promote tourism.	CVB, DFWD, BCI		X		
	Market Wichita Falls and its tourism products to patrons of casinos.	CVB				X
	Continue to pursue state and regional conventions.	CVB				X

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS		TIMELINE				
Description	Regional Partner(s)	0-6 mos.	6-12 mos.	2-3 yrs.	3-5 yrs.	On-going
City – City of Wichita Falls; BCI – Board of Commerce and Industry; DWFD – Downtown Wichita Falls Development; CVB – Wichita Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau; WS – Workforce Solutions North Texas; MSU – Midwestern State University; VC – Vernon College; ISDs – Area School Districts; HC – Healthcare Industry Cluster Team; SAFB – Sheppard Air Force Base; SMAC – Sheppard Military Affairs Committee; DEV – Developers & Brokers; SBDC – Small Business Development Center; NPO – Non-Profit Organizations						
OPPORTUNITY: IMAGE AND MARKETING <u>Budget Summary</u> Professional Marketing Consultant \$100,000 - \$125,000 Comprehensive marketing budget TBD based on plan Marketing Coordinator \$40,000 annually						
1	Commission community-wide marketing and image plan.					
	Call upon talents of a professional marketing consultant to assist with aspects of an overall image and marketing plan for the Wichita Falls region.	BCI; City; CVB		X		
2	Designate an individual to manage the city-wide marketing campaign.					
	Recruit and hire a marketing coordinator.	City		X		X
3	Initiate a local positive image campaign.					
	Develop and implement an internal marketing effort.	All		X		
4	Build awareness of the region among decision-makers in target industries and site selectors.					
	Identify key industry associations for each target.	BCI	X			

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS		TIMELINE				
Description	Regional Partner(s)	0-6 mos.	6-12 mos.	2-3 yrs.	3-5 yrs.	On-going
City – City of Wichita Falls; BCI – Board of Commerce and Industry; DWFD – Downtown Wichita Falls Development; CVB – Wichita Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau; WS – Workforce Solutions North Texas; MSU – Midwestern State University; VC – Vernon College; ISDs – Area School Districts; HC – Healthcare Industry Cluster Team; SAFB – Sheppard Air Force Base; SMAC – Sheppard Military Affairs Committee; DEV – Developers & Brokers; SBDC – Small Business Development Center; NPO – Non-Profit Organizations						
Create and maintain a database of regional and national companies for each target.	BCI	X				X
Develop local intelligence and expertise for each targeted industry.	BCI	X				X
Design marketing material and initial direct mail programs for each target.	BCI		X			
Participate in industry trade events.	BCI			X		
Maintain a database of site consultants.	BCI	X				X
Hold a “developer’s day” in Wichita Falls for site consultants and regional industrial and commercial brokers.	BCI			X		
5	Maximize the impression of Wichita Falls to visitors.					
Re-evaluate the current Hotter ‘n Hell 100 route and look for alternative paths that accentuate the most attractive areas of the city.	Race org. City; CVB; DWFD	X				
Purchase a portable information kiosk.	CVB			X		
6	Continue city-wide beautification initiatives.					
Continue median beautification efforts.	City	X				X
Expand the profile and impact of the “Wichita Falls Clean Country Registry” program.	City	X				X
Enhance connections with the Wichita River and trail system.	City	X				X

STRATEGY / ACTION ITEMS		TIMELINE				
Description	Regional Partner(s)	0-6 mos.	6-12 mos.	2-3 yrs.	3-5 yrs.	On-going
City – City of Wichita Falls; BCI – Board of Commerce and Industry; DWFD – Downtown Wichita Falls Development; CVB – Wichita Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau; WS – Workforce Solutions North Texas; MSU – Midwestern State University; VC – Vernon College; ISDs – Area School Districts; HC – Healthcare Industry Cluster Team; SAFB – Sheppard Air Force Base; SMAC – Sheppard Military Affairs Committee; DEV – Developers & Brokers; SBDC – Small Business Development Center; NPO – Non-Profit Organizations						
OPPORTUNITY: SPECIAL AREAS <u>Budget Summary</u> No new expenditures.						
1	Support a “Gateway” project near the north gate of Sheppard Air Force Base.					
	Encourage the creation of a public/private partnership.	City, SAFB		X	X	X
	Consider offering an incentives package.	City		X	X	
2	Support revitalization of East Wichita Falls.					
	Advocate for and actively support downtown revitalization.	City, NPO				X
	Position East Wichita Falls as the destination for any larger retailers.	City, NPO			X	X
	Secure available funding for community improvements.	City, NPO				X
	Continue infill housing program & land banking.	City, NPO				X
	Collaborate closely with the non-profit community.	City, NPO				X



APPENDICES

Appendix A: Target Business & Industry Sectors

Appendix B: Sheppard Air Force Base Veterans Survey

Appendix C: Entrepreneurial Assessment

Appendix D: Community Needs Assessment

Appendix A: Target Business & Industry Sectors

LABOR

Specific characteristics, including regional talent/labor (i.e., availability, wage rates, and level of qualifications) and access to educational infrastructure (i.e., higher education and workforce development programs) play an important role in site selection.

ECONOMY

Economic considerations, including access to markets (local, regional, and global), suppliers and customers, public policies (e.g. incentives, taxation, regulations etc.), and availability of capital (investment, venture) strongly affect these site location decisions.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Factors, such as availability of land, buildings, raw materials, utilities, visibility, and access to transportation (such as the proximity to highways, rail, and airports) also have an important effect on a site's suitability.

As part of our planning process, the consulting team was charged with recommending industry recruitment targets for the Wichita Falls region. Unlike traditional approaches, which focus on a limited array of factors (e.g., workforce, available sites, and incentives), we identify target industries using a three-pronged approach: **quantitative**, **qualitative**, and **strategic**.

Our analysis is based on a more detailed, cluster-based approach that examines employment and occupational trends in the region. However, our target industry recommendations are not based solely on these factors. We supplement this quantitative analysis with the information gathered in interviews conducted with area leaders. Through these interviews, we are better able to understand potential opportunities and challenges that might not be identified from these secondary data sources. In addition, the consulting team brings to bear an appreciation of broader socioeconomic trends such as capital investment trends, emerging markets, and demographic shifts.

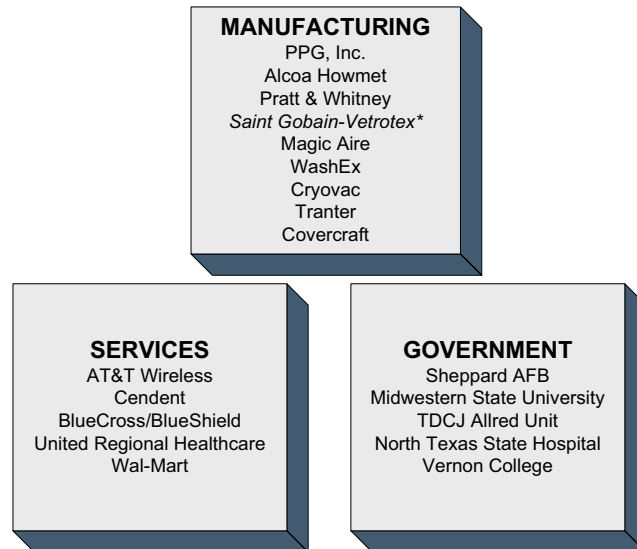
Finally, we strongly consider how targets might fit within the overall strategic framework of the plan and how they might affect Wichita Falls's ability to attract talent to the area.

Once potential targets are identified, we consider economic development trends in each sector. We avoid recommending targets that have been "fashionable" or that are over-saturated with interest from economic development organizations. For this reason, we have not recommended sectors such as bio-technology, automotive assembly, or semi-conductors.

Rather, building from existing Wichita Falls Board of Commerce and Industry (BCI) target sectors, we have identified industries with the potential to capitalize on area assets and to help the region differentiate itself from other communities competing for talent and jobs. We have also recommended some non-traditional economic sectors and development opportunities that are not typically targeted by economic development organizations, yet are becoming increasingly important to local and regional economic growth throughout the nation.

Wichita Falls is home to a considerable workforce possessing technical skills that are highly sought after by many advanced manufacturers. Some of the region's most advanced industrial employers include Alcoa Howmet (gas turbine engine components), Pratt & Whitney Components Repair (refurbishment of jet engines), and Tranter (plate and frame heat exchangers & transfer units).

Large Employers in the Wichita Falls Region



* Expected to close in third quarter 2008.

Understanding LQs

A location quotient (LQ) is calculated as a local occupation's share of total local employment divided by the same occupation's share of employment at the national level:

$$LQ = \frac{\text{Local jobs in occupation} / \text{Total local jobs}}{\text{U.S. jobs in occupation} / \text{Total U.S. jobs}}$$

If the local occupation and national occupation are perfectly proportional, the location quotient will be 1.00. If an occupation is heavily concentrated at the local level, then the location quotient will be higher than 1.00. Conversely, if the occupation is sparsely concentrated at the local level, the location quotient will be lower than 1.00.

While the recent closures in the manufacturing sector are not positive news for the regional economy as a whole, they do create short-term opportunities from a labor market perspective by augmenting the supply of available skilled workers. The closure of the Delphi Energy & Engine Management (exhaust oxygen sensors/ turbine fuel pumps) Wichita Falls plant in September 2007 as part of a national corporate reorganization and the recently announced closure of the Saint Gobain Vetrotex (fiberglass reinforcements) plant will infuse additional available skilled labor into the region's workforce in the short-term. However, in the longer-term, if these workers are not able to find suitable employment in the region, they will likely relocate.

The consulting team recommends the following targets as the best (both long- and short-term) opportunities for the BCI's economic development efforts. We believe these represent the best opportunities for business startup, retention, expansion, and attraction activities. These sectors are selected for their ability to serve a dual purpose: 1) to bolster and diversify the regional economy over the short-term by taking advantage of existing assets and 2) to provide a pathway to sustained economic vitality over the long-term.

TARGET SELECTION MATRIX

TARGETS	LABOR	ECONOMY	INFRASTRUCTURE	SCORE
AEROSPACE & AVIATION	+	+	+	+++
ALTERNATIVE ENERGY	+	+	+	+++
ADVANCED MATERIALS	+	+	=	++
BUILDING MATERIALS & SYSTEMS	+	+	=	++
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	+	+	=	++
HEALTHCARE	=	+	+	++

KEY: + local competitive advantage = no local competitive advantage

METHODOLOGY

Location quotients (LQs) are used to better understand the composition of the regional workforce and identify concentrations of industries and economic sectors. Location quotients measure relative concentrations of particular occupations, industries, and economic sectors. Most often, location quotients are used to show local industry concentrations through industry employment data. However, for this analysis, the consulting team focused on identifying certain occupational

concentrations that may provide Wichita Falls with a competitive advantage in attracting high value, emerging industry employers.

The consulting team selected four occupational groupings important for economic development: management, engineering & computers, healthcare, and transport/production. Within each of these groupings, we identified the occupations in the Wichita Falls MSA that had at least 50 jobs and an LQ of 1.0 or higher. Within the production/transportation group, 17 occupations met these criteria; 16 in the healthcare group; and three emerged in both the engineering/computer group and in the management group, respectively

Of the 39 occupations, four are often cited by employers nationwide as particularly difficult to find. Three of the four are production occupations, while the other is a management occupation. The figure below shows the four occupations in high demand nationally and their local location quotients.

In-Demand Occupations





OES CODE	DESCRIPTION	AREA LQ
51-4121	Welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers	3.24
51-2041	Structural metal fabricators and fitters	2.45
51-4011	Computer-controlled machine tool operators, metal and plastic	2.38
11-1021	General and operations managers	1.35

Combining the occupational analysis for the Wichita Falls region with existing local assets, the consulting team identified industry sectors that hold strong promise for Wichita Falls. Furthermore, they are advanced sectors that incorporate higher value added processes and components, which should therefore translate into higher capital investment and wages. Even shared service centers involve higher level professional services than do most in-bound call or bill processing centers.

Some of the recommended industries (e.g., Alternative Energy) are emerging sectors with significant potential for long-term growth. Sectors such as Aerospace and Advanced Materials, are more mature, yet are also associated with advanced research and technology.

Another factor influencing the selection of these particular sectors is potential overlap in experience and requirements between them. For example, existing local skill assets involving the production or processing of advanced materials may also make the region attractive to primary employers in the aerospace and building materials sectors. Likewise, workers with experience and skills working on aircraft engine turbine blades may be able to translate some of that knowledge to the production of wind turbines.

Below we provide detailed profiles of five target niches (indicated with bold letters).

ASSET	SECTOR	NICHE(S)
 Alcoa Howmet  ADVANCED MATERIALS	AEROSPACE & AVIATION	avionics aircraft engines & parts
  CRYOVAC Food Packaging Systems	ADVANCED MATERIALS	composites
 ADVANCED MATERIALS	BUILDING MATERIAL & SYSTEMS	integrated building systems
EXISTING ENERGY SECTOR TURBINE MANUFACTURING MESA POWER WIND PROJECT	ALTERNATIVE ENERGY	wind generation equipment
AFFORDABLE OFFICE SPACE DILLARD COLLEGE @ MSU	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	shared service centers

AEROSPACE & AVIATION

niche / **aircraft engines, parts, & avionics**

TRENDS

The U.S. aerospace and airline industry is finally showing signs of recovering from the severe financial misery caused by 9/11. After experiencing losses amounting to nearly \$40 billion between 2002 and 2007, major U.S. airlines are beginning to make a comeback. Passenger traffic, aircraft use, fares, and unit revenues have improved. And while fuel costs have surged, labor costs have fallen by 33 percent and unit costs have dropped by 13 percent since 2001.

The improving health of the global airline industry has resulted in a surge of new orders for commercial aircraft from Boeing and Airbus. Indeed, TEAMSAI, an aviation consulting company, projects the world-wide airline fleet will increase by 42 percent by over the next decade, going from 17,600 aircraft this year to 25,000 aircraft in 2017.

The business jet industry has, in recent years, experienced significant growth, fueled primarily by strong demand from customers outside of North America. One sub-market within the business jet industry that holds substantial promise is the new class of very light jets (VLJ). VLJs generally weigh around 10,000 lbs and range in price from less than \$1 million to 44 million. Potential customers for VLJs include individual owner/operators, small companies, large companies, air charter services, and the nascent air taxi sector.

Aviation turbine engine production is a sector benefiting significantly from the rebound of global aviation. Indeed, Forecast International expects a total of 107,543 turbofan, turboshaft, and turboprop engines to be produced between 2007 and 2016, representing a total production value of \$236.5 billion. Moreover, since most of the major U.S. airlines have yet to begin recapitalizing their fleets, about 1,000 aircraft – all needing new engines – will likely be ordered just to replace existing aircraft. Production of turbofan engines alone is expected to reach 70,546 units, with a combined value totaling \$210 billion.

The avionics sector, for both military and commercial aircraft, should also experience robust growth. The need and demand for military self-protection systems is driving much of the military demand. However, the development of active electronically scanned array (AESA) radar technology and its potential electronic warfare capabilities should provide a new source of demand for the military

Definition

Aviation-related activities include the manufacture of aircraft, engines, parts, and auxiliary equipment. The industry also includes establishments engaged in servicing, repairing, rebuilding, maintaining, and storing aircraft. Establishments are often either affiliated with an air carrier, an original equipment manufacturer or can be a third-party contractor.

avionics sector over the next 10 years. The boom in global commercial and business aviation markets should also fuel commensurate growth in the commercial avionics sector.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

- Skilled and/or trainable labor
- Proximity to other aviation-related firms (e.g., parts and materials suppliers and defense contractors)
- Large industrial sites with access to airport (e.g., rail served sites and interstate access)
- Business costs, including labor and taxes
- Adequate utilities infrastructure (e.g., electricity, water/wastewater)

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS & RATIONALE

- Existing workforce with potentially transferable skills
- SAFB is home to highly advanced aerospace maintenance training and faculty development programs, including aircraft systems maintenance, fighter and bomber avionics maintenance, and telecommunications. While most students in these programs are only deployed to SAFB on a temporary basis, some instructors separate from military service at Sheppard; many of whom are willing to remain in the region after their service ends.
- Another source of skilled talent in this sector is SAFB's largest private contractor, Lear Seigler Services, Inc., which provides aircraft maintenance services to the Base.
- Proximity to deep aerospace talent base in the DFW Metroplex.
- Proximity to DFW-area military jet and helicopter assembly operations.

Representative Companies

NAICS	Company	Location
334111	GE Fanuc Embedded Systems	Charlottesville, VA
334419	Emteq Aerospace	Muskego, WI
335999	Advanced Avionics	Ann Arbor, MI
336413	ACK Technologies	San Jose, CA
336413	Avtech	Seattle, WA
423690	Able Avionics	Van Nuys, CA
811310	Aero Instruments & Avionics	North Tonawanda, NY
811219	ASB Avionics	Mojave, CA

Trade Associations

- Aircraft Electronics Association (AEA)
 - 1300 business members, including avionics manufacturers
- Other trade associations that include aspects of avionics but have a much broader focus are:
 - General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA)
 - Light Aircraft Manufacturers Association (LAMA)
 - National Business Aviation Association (NBAA)

TRADE EVENTS

- Aircraft Electronics Association (AEA) annual convention schedule:
 - 2008 Washington, DC April 23-26, 2008
 - 2009 Dallas, TX April 1-4, 2009
 - 2010 Orlando, FL April 7-10, 2010
 - 2011 Reno, NV March 30-April 2, 2011
- Aircraft Electronics Association (AEA) regional meetings worldwide
 - AEA Europe May 18-19, 2007 Cologne, Germany
 - AEA South Pacific August 23-24, 2007 Canberra, Australia
 - AEA Central September 13-14, 2007 St. Louis, MO
 - AEA Canada October 11-12 Toronto, Ontario
 - AEA West October 25-26 Irvine, CA
 - AEA East November 8-9 Orlando, FL

Definition

Composites involve the combination of two or more materials with distinctly different properties. When combined, these materials are often referred to as engineered, and they are often designed for narrowly defined applications such as strength or resistance in specific environments.

ADVANCED MATERIALS

niche / **composites**

TRENDS

While technological innovation is often associated with cutting edge industries such as microprocessing or biotechnology, the production of everyday materials such as textiles, metals, and plastics has also been revolutionized by technological advances. Everything from microfiber raincoats to engineered stone for kitchen counters to the heat-resistant tiles that line the nose of a space shuttle represent aspects of what we think of as “advanced materials.” The building blocks for advanced materials include such diverse inputs as:

- engineered polymers
- resins
- specialty chemicals
- advanced fibers
- specialty adhesives
- structural ceramics
- powder metals
- high temperature alloys
- surface engineering

One promising niche within the broad world of advanced materials is composites, or the combination of two materials of differing properties to create something new and unique with a specific application. Cutting-edge composites are important and growing technological components of many industries including aviation, automotive, shipbuilding, and construction materials, to name a few.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

- Skilled and/or trainable labor
- Proximity to firms that incorporate advanced materials into their products

Representative Companies

NAICS	Company	Location
325991	Advanced Composites (Ube Industries)	Nashville, TN
325991	Advanced Composites (Mitsui Chemicals)	Sidney, OH
325211	Cook Composites & Polymers	Kansas City, KS
332312	Alcan Composites USA (Alcan)	Benton, KY
336399	Raytech Composites	Crawfordsville, IN
325520	Newport Adhesives & Composites (Mitsubishi Rayon)	Irvine, CA
336413	Programmed Composites	Corona, CA
325211	Total Composites (Total, SA)	Philadelphia, PA

Trade Associations & Events

American Composites Manufacturers Association
1010 N Glebe Road
Arlington, VA 22201
tel: (703) 525-0743
www.mdacomposites.org/mda/

Composites Industry Investments Forum
New York, NY
Feb 21-22, 2008
<http://www.compositesworld.com>

- Large industrial sites with access to airport (e.g., rail served sites and interstate access)
- Business costs, including labor and taxes
- Adequate utilities infrastructure (e.g., electricity, water/wastewater)

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS & RATIONALE

- Existing workforce with potentially transferable skills
- Proximity to potential customer base, especially in aerospace/aviation sector
- Potential complementary target to wind power generation equipment – the composites industry's fastest growing fiber-reinforced polymer application
- Composites are heavily utilized in the production of aircraft engines & parts and building materials.
- Long-term growth industry with both existing and potential broad applications

Niche Opportunities

- Materials research
- Energy efficiency systems
- Building security systems
- Weather-proofing systems
- Computer systems integration
- Modular or prefab buildings design and assembly

Trade Associations

Building Systems Councils of the National Association of Home Builders

1201 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
tel: 800-368-5242
www.nahb.org/page.aspx/category/sectionID=454

Continental Automated Buildings Association

1200 Montreal Road
Building M-20
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0R6
tel: 888-798-2222
www.caba.org

BUILDING SYSTEMS & MATERIALS

niche / **integrated building systems**

TRENDS

In the coming decade, the traditional piece-by-piece construction of new homes and commercial buildings will no longer be the norm. The construction industry is on the verge of a revolution fueled by the integration of new materials, information technology, design, and modular assembly. Builders and contractors are learning to use these tools to generate greater efficiencies and effectiveness in climate-controlling, weatherproofing, security systems, and time and cost required for construction. Increasingly, homes are being constructed through the use of integrated and intelligent building systems, a technique combining advanced machinery and prefabrication in order to construct buildings in less time and at less cost.

According to the Building Systems Councils (BSC) of the National Association of Home Builders, nearly 50,000 modular homes were constructed in the U.S. during 2004, representing a 50 percent production increase in just 10 years. The increased cost of housing, especially in fast-growing states, and more modern home designs has been largely attributed to recent increases in production and desirability. In this type of housing, the building blocks or individual modules are components constructed in a controlled factory environment and are nearly complete when shipped from the factory to the home site.

Information technology and modern design is also playing a strong role in this trend, according to the Continental Automated Buildings Association. On the upper end of the real estate market, an increasing number of “smart homes” are being offered to consumers. Smart homes include integrated systems that take advantage of technological advances such as the convergence of information technology, communications networking, and new materials to make homes more energy-efficient, secure, and weatherproof.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

- Proximity to population growth centers (i.e. demand for housing).
- Industrial sites with access to transportation (e.g., rail served sites and interstate access).

Building Systems Cluster

NAICS	DESCRIPTION
236117	Modular housing, residential, assembled on site
238990	All other specialty trade contractors
3212	Veneer, plywood, & engineered wood product mfg.
321991	Manufactured home (mobile home) manufacturing
324122	Asphalt shingle and coating materials manufacturing
332311	Prefabricated metal building and component mfg.
541310	Architectural services
541340	Drafting services
541380	Industrial, mechanical, & metallurgical testing lab or svcs.
541420	Industrial design services
541511	Custom computer programming services
541512	CAD systems integration design services
541710	Engineering research & development labs or services
561621	Security systems services

- Availability of industrial land.
- Availability of industrial and warehouse/distribution space.
- Availability of semi-skilled production labor, as well as white-collar professionals and design technicians.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS & RATIONALE

- Central location within the fast-growing Sunbelt and access to DFW, generating strong overall demand for housing and construction materials
- Introduction of information technologies and advanced materials in building design and construction is forcing a shift toward metropolitan regions with an availability of skilled talent.
- Increased climate change concerns are fueling renewed research and integration of “green building” techniques to make homes and commercial buildings more energy efficient.
- Presence of existing building materials and related businesses

Definition

Alternative energy tends to describe those enterprises and related activities for generating power (e.g., electricity, transportation fuels) from energy sources other than fossil fuels. This power is generated through the exploitation of renewable energy sources (i.e., sources are not destroyed when their energy is released). The use of renewable energy requires technologies that can efficiently transform the power of natural phenomena (e.g., wind, sunlight, water flow, geothermal heat, and biological processes) into usable energy. Alternative/renewable energy sources often cause less pollution in the production of power than traditional fossil fuels.

Wind Generation Equipment

Wind power is a form of renewable energy by which wind is converted to electricity by a turbine. The sector is comprised primarily of power project developers, equipment suppliers, services providers, parts manufacturers, and utilities.

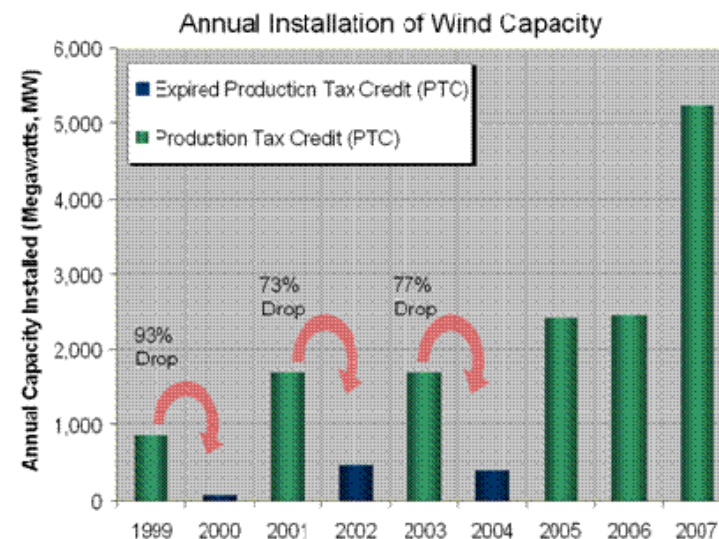
ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

niche / **wind generation equipment**

TRENDS

Wind power generation capacity increased 45 percent in 2007. As a result of this record-setting growth, the U.S. wind power fleet now numbers 16,818 MW and spans 34 states. American wind farms will generate an estimated 48 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) of wind energy in 2008, just over 1 percent of U.S. electricity supply, powering the equivalent of over 4.5 million homes.

According to the American Wind Energy Association, this growth pattern should continue, depending on the timing and duration of the federal production tax credit.



Source: AWEA 2008 Market Report

Trade Associations & Events

American Wind Energy Association
1101 14TH Street NW, 12th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
tel: (202) 383-2500
<http://www.awea.org/>

Wind Power 2008 Conference in Exhibition
Houston, TX
June 1-4, 2008
<http://www.windpowerexpo.org/>

Texas has become the nations leading wind power provider, with a 4,356 MW capacity as of December 2007. Currently, over 8,000 MW of new wind projects have been announced in Texas. However, a shortage has led to at least a two-year wait to fill turbine orders.

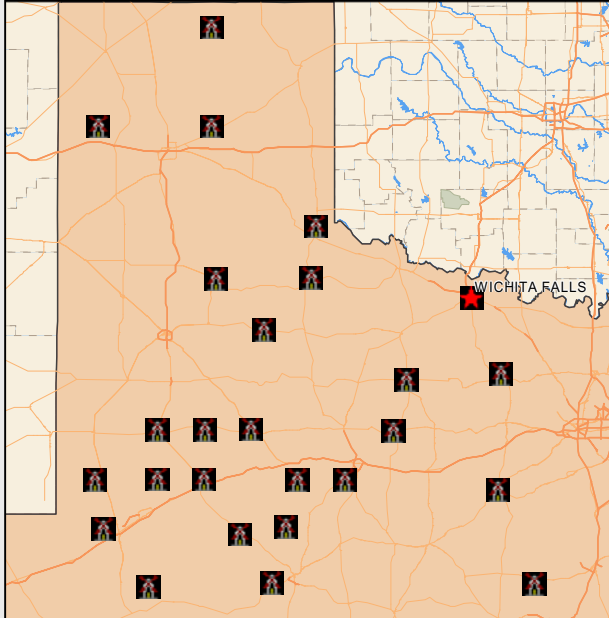
SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

- Proximity to market due to high transportation costs (especially wind power)
- Available workforce with advanced manufacturing skills (welders, machinists, solders, engine assembly & repair)
- Access to raw materials
- Access to transportation networks (highway & rail)
- Affordable electrical power
- Industrial / light industrial & warehouse space for product assembly
- Proximity to research & development facilities

RATIONALE

- Existing competitive advantages in turbine manufacturing, and advanced materials.
- Available skilled workforce
 - Welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers
 - Structural metal fabricators and fitters
 - Computer-controlled machine tool operators, metals, & plastics
 - General and operations managers
- Proximity to markets

Regional Wind Projects



Source: Public Utilities Commission of Texas.

Installed in 2007

Company	MW	Turbines
GE Energy	2,342	1,561
Vestas	953	537
Siemens	863	375
Gamesa	484	242
Mitsubishi Power Systems	356	356
Suzlon	197	97
Clipper	48	19
Nordex	2.5	1

Source: AWEA 2008 Market Report.

- The map to the left shows the distribution of wind projects in the Northwest Texas region. While the highest concentration of projects is in the western portion of the state, over 1,000 MW of existing and planned wind projects lie within 100 miles of Wichita Falls. The 4,000 MW Mesa Power project will be located in the Panhandle, about 200 miles away.

- Availability of suitable industrial lands and buildings
- Good access to highways (Hwy 287 & I-44) and rail (BNSF and Union Pacific)

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS & RATIONALE

- The glass reinforcement produced by Saint Gobain-Vetrotex are primary components of wind turbine poles and blades.
- Turbines contain numerous components similar to products already manufactured in Wichita Falls, e.g. cooling systems, turbines, mechanical brakes, and electronic controllers.
- Wind power generation equipment is the composites industry's fastest growing fiber-reinforced polymer application.
- Fast-growing industry with bright long-term growth potential

WIND POWER CLUSTER

NAICS	Description
<u>221119</u>	Power generation, wind electric
<u>325211</u>	Plastics Material and Resin Manufacturing
<u>333611</u>	Windmills, electric power, generation-type, manufacturing
<u>335312</u>	Motor and Generator Manufacturing
<u>335314</u>	Relay and Industrial Control Manufacturing
<u>334513</u>	Instruments and Related Products Manufacturing for Measuring, Displaying, and Controlling Industrial Process Variables
<u>333415</u>	Air-Conditioning and Warm Air Heating Equipment and Commercial and Industrial Refrigeration Equipment Manufacturing
<u>333999</u>	All Other Miscellaneous General Purpose Machinery Manufacturing

Definition

Shared Service Centers (SSCs) reduce costs by consolidating one or more back-office operations used by multiple divisions of the same company—such as finance, information technology, customer service and human resources—into a shared operation. By creating a stand-alone or semi-autonomous Shared Service Center, companies can eliminate redundant activities and improve efficiency, services and customer satisfaction.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

niche / **shared service centers**

TRENDS

Shared service centers have proven to be effective models to reduce costs and increase productivity for organizations managing large-scale operations. Organizations in both the private and public sector have embraced this model to improve their efficiency.

The move towards shared services began in the 1980s and has accelerated ever since. While the first generation of shared service centers were typically single-function centers, today's shared service centers are moving towards a multi-function model. The functions most commonly consolidated in shared service centers are finance and accounting, human resources, information technology, and procurement. Facilities, customer service, real estate, supply chain, order management, and legal are also functions that are sometimes included in a multi-function shared service center.

Shared service centers reduce costs primarily by reducing redundancies, streamlining and standardizing processes, and realizing economies of scale that may not be possible under a decentralized service model. The centers deliver their services by treating each department they serve as internal clients or customers.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

- Available workforce with professional services skills
- Reliable communications infrastructure
- Availability of high quality office space
- Comparatively low-cost overhead
- Low natural disaster risk

Trade Associations & Events

Shared Service and Outsourcing Network
tel: 800 882 8684
<http://www.iqpc.com/cgi-bin/templates/single.html?topic=240>

The 12th Annual Shared Services Week
March 30 - April 3, 2008
Omni Orlando Resort, Orlando, FL
www.iqpc.com/us/sharedservicesweek

RATIONALE

- Affordable office space greatly reduces overhead costs
- Reliable communications with access to fiber optic ring and multiple service providers
- Strong MBA program at MSU
- SAFB retirees and spouses represent potential workforce.
- Potential target for downtown office space, especially if concurrent development of support services and retail occurs in the downtown

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Be aware that the location requires that companies mitigate tornado risk (location in "Tornado Alley")
- First target companies that already have a presence in Wichita Falls already (i.e. AT&T and Alcoa Howmet)
- Potential for customized training programs provided by MSU & Vernon College

Appendix B: Sheppard Air Force Base Veterans Survey

Veterans Possess Many Characteristics that Appeal to Employers

- Demonstrated leadership and managerial skills
- Training to industry standards
- The ability to adapt quickly to change
- Knowledge of advanced technologies
- Experience working effectively under extreme pressure
- Education and professional certification credentials
- Strong work ethic
- Experience working within and/or leading diverse teams
- Effective written and verbal communications skills
- Security clearances
- History of accepting and following orders from superiors

One of the region's greatest economic development assets is the pool of skilled, educated, disciplined, and motivated workers associated with SAFB. This workforce consists of Air Force retirees living in the region as well as current airmen separating from service through Sheppard. This pool of existing and potential labor is further enhanced by the spouses of active duty personnel and veterans, who themselves are often highly skilled and educated. Unfortunately, many military families do not remain in the Wichita Falls area after their service ends due to a lack of adequate employment opportunities that fully utilize their skills and abilities.

In order to better understand and document the unique characteristics of the region's military related workforce, area economic and workforce development organizations should regularly inventory the intentions, educational levels, skills, and desired employment of airmen separating from the military at SAFB. The primary objective of the SAFB inventory is to capture critical information about this population that can be used to recruit companies considering new locations for relocation or expansion, thus providing enhanced employment opportunities for residents in the SAFB region. The inventory will additionally capture insightful information regarding the skills and desired career fields of military spouses, further enhancing talent retention and business recruitment to the region. Finally, the survey will gather valuable feedback on issues related to quality of life (Place) in the region – information which is critical to successfully retaining the best and the brightest in the community.

Purpose and Methodology

As part of the Defense Diversification Plan, the consulting team conducted an initial analysis of the region's active duty military personnel separating from service through Sheppard Air Force Base (SAFB). The purpose of the inventory is to document the unique characteristics of this workforce and their potential impact on the regional civilian labor pool. To accomplish this task, we developed a one-page questionnaire that was provided to SAFB airmen attending Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshops conducted by the Airmen & Family Readiness Flight (A&FRF) at Sheppard. The TAP workshops are designed to assist the transition of military personnel to careers.

SURVEY OF POST-MILITARY SERVICE INTENT

This brief survey is designed to assist economic development and workforce officials in the Wichita Falls region in creating expanded employment opportunities for military personnel separating from service through Sheppard Air Force Base (SAFB) and their spouses. Your voluntary assistance in answering the questions below is greatly appreciated.

1. How many years of service do you possess?
 5 or less ☐ 6 to 19 ☐ 20 or more ☐
2. What is your reason for leaving the military?
 Retirement ☐ ETS ☐ Medical ☐
3. Are you planning to stay in the region (within 30 miles of SAFB) after your service ends?
 Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐
4. Would you stay in the region (within 30 miles) if desirable employment were available?
 Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐
5. What is your highest level of education completed?
 High School/GED ☐ Associates Degree ☐ Masters Degree ☐
 Some College ☐ Bachelors Degree ☐ Ph.D. ☐
6. Please mark any area in which you hold a technical/professional certificate.
 Advanced Computer ☐ Aviation ☐ Communications/Electronics ☐ Engineering ☐ Education/Teaching ☐ Law Enforcement ☐ Logistics/Warehousing/Materials ☐ Mechanical ☐ Medical/Healthcare ☐ Transportation (CDL) ☐ Office/Administrative ☐ Other ☐
7. What type of post-military employment do YOU desire?
 Administrative/Office ☐ Aviation ☐ Communications/Electronics ☐ Computers/Software ☐ Engineering ☐ Education/Teaching ☐ Equipment Maintenance/Repair ☐ Law Enforcement/Security ☐ Management/Business ☐ Manufacturing ☐ Medical/Healthcare ☐ Transportation/Warehousing ☐
8. What type of employment does your SPOUSE desire?
 Administrative/Office ☐ Aviation ☐ Communications/Electronics ☐ Computers/Software ☐ Engineering ☐ Education/Teaching ☐ Equipment Maintenance/Repair ☐ Law Enforcement/Security ☐ Management/Business ☐ Manufacturing ☐ Medical/Healthcare ☐ Transportation/Warehousing ☐
9. Improvements in which other area would most positively affect your decision to remain in the region?
 Higher Education Offerings ☐ Child Care ☐ Retail/Shopping ☐ Housing ☐ Healthcare ☐ Entertainment/Recreation ☐ Other ☐

TAP provides employment and training information and assistance to service members and spouses within 180 days of separation or retirement. The program consists of multi-day workshops, where attendees learn about such subjects as searching for jobs, current labor market conditions, resume and cover letter preparation, and interviewing techniques.

At SAFB, TAP classes are held monthly and facilitated by Airmen & Family Readiness Flight staff members. The TAP classes are ideal venues for administering the survey because there are a manageable number of potential respondents – typically about 30 – who have an interest in responding to the questions and who will be leaving the military within six months.

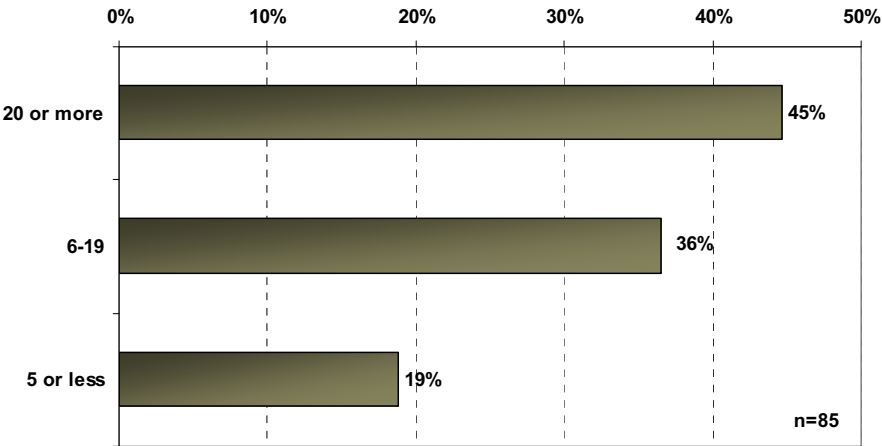
The questionnaires were completed during three TAP workshops conducted in October and November 2007, and January 2008. All service members attending TAP workshops are scheduled to leave the active duty service within six months. In total, 85 airmen and officers completed at least portions of the questionnaires.

The objective of the survey was to obtain basic information on length of service, educational attainment, intent to remain in the region permanently, professional and technical skills, desired career fields for the service member and spouse, and views on other quality of place issues that would affect their decision to remain in the region.

The survey questionnaire and the results of the completed surveys are included on the following pages.

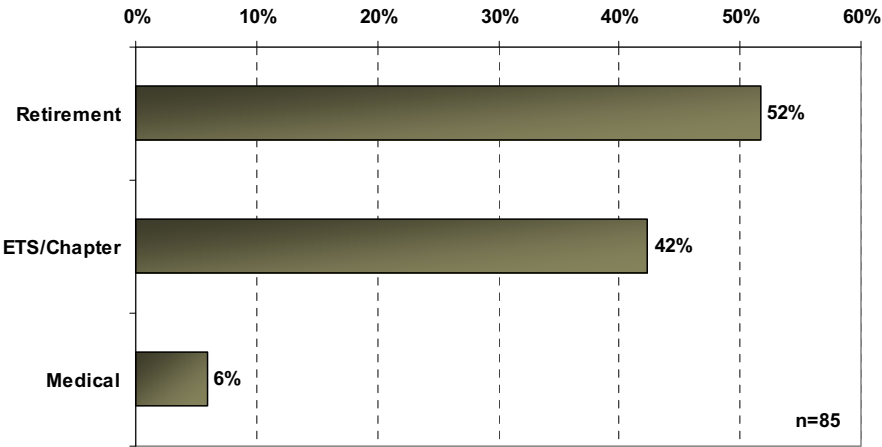
Survey Results

Q1. How many years of service do you possess?



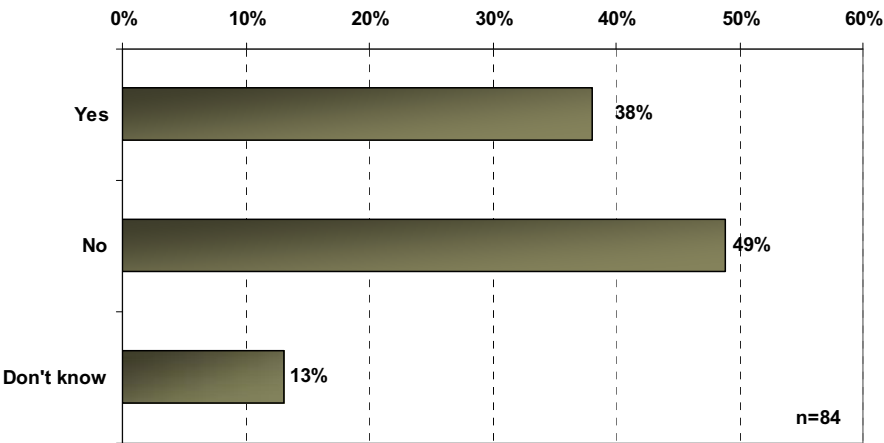
Of the 85 airmen and officers responding to the question regarding current years of service, 45 percent served 20 or more years, while 36 percent served 6 to 19 years. Only 15 percent have served five years or less. Given the training mission of SAFB and higher level of expertise of the personnel typically stationed there, the higher proportion of more experienced retirees is not surprising.

Q2. What is your reason for leaving the military?



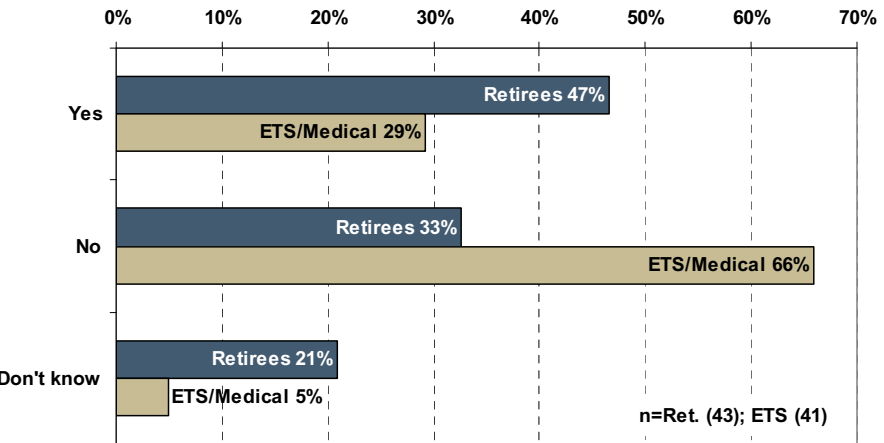
Slightly more than 50 percent of respondents cite retirement as their reason for leaving the military, while 42 percent are leaving due to Expiration of Term of Service (ETS). Six percent are departing service due to medical reasons.

Q3. Are you planning to stay in the region (within 30 miles of Sheppard AFB) after your service ends?



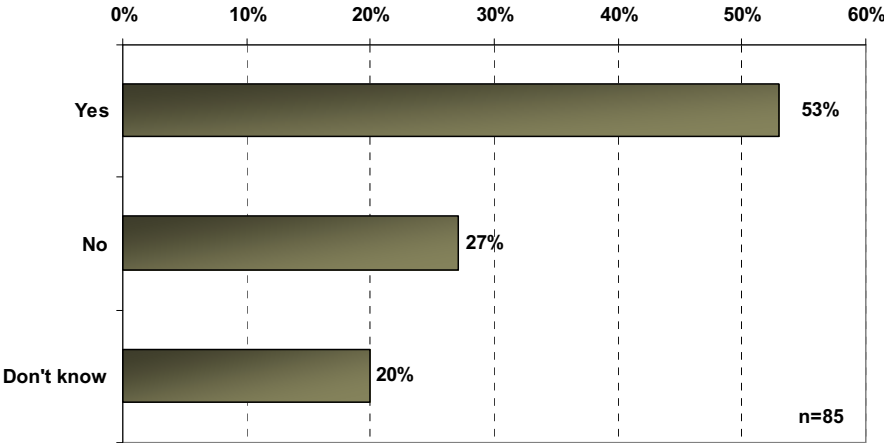
Under current circumstances, 38 percent of respondents plan to remain in the region at the conclusion of their military service. Almost 50 percent are planning to leave, while the remaining 13 percent are unsure.

Q3. Are you planning to stay in the region (within 30 miles of Sheppard AFB) after your service ends?



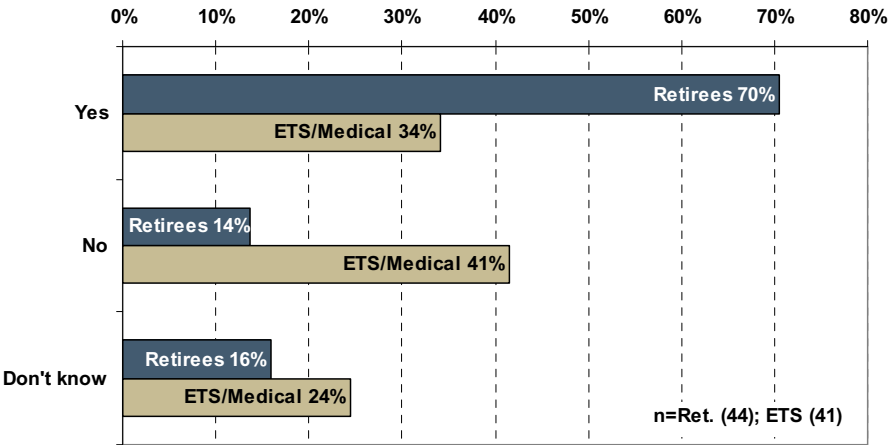
Among retirees, who are older and likely to have lived in the region for longer, almost one-half indicate they plan to remain and one-third intend to leave. One-fifth of non-retirees do not know. Conversely, two-thirds of ETS/medical respondents state they plan to leave the region, while about one-third plan to remain locally. Only 5 percent of ETS/Medical respondents are unsure of their post-military plans.

Q4. Would you stay in the region (within 30 miles) if desirable employment were available?



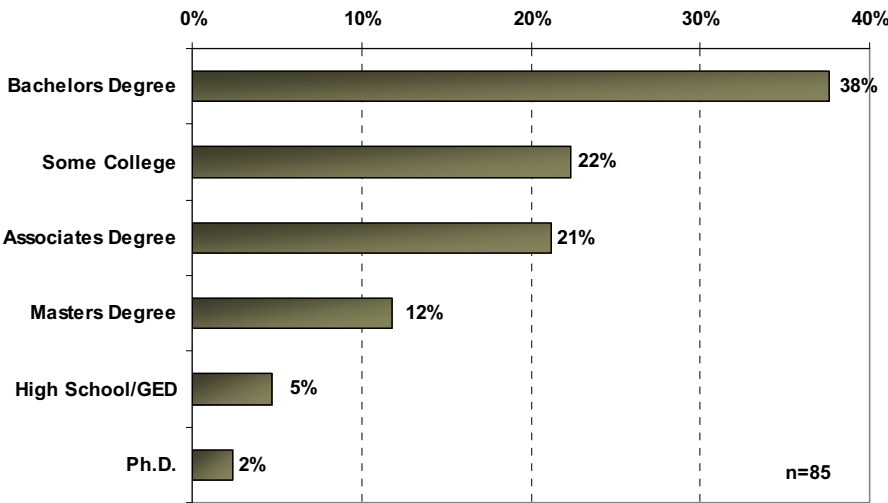
The survey suggests more airmen and officers would remain in the region if they could find a good job. When asked if they would stay if desirable employment were available, the percentage of total respondents answering “yes” rose 15 percentage points to 52 percent. The percentage who previously answered “no” to Q3 fell by 22 percentage points.

Q4. Would you stay in the region (within 30 miles) if desirable employment were available?



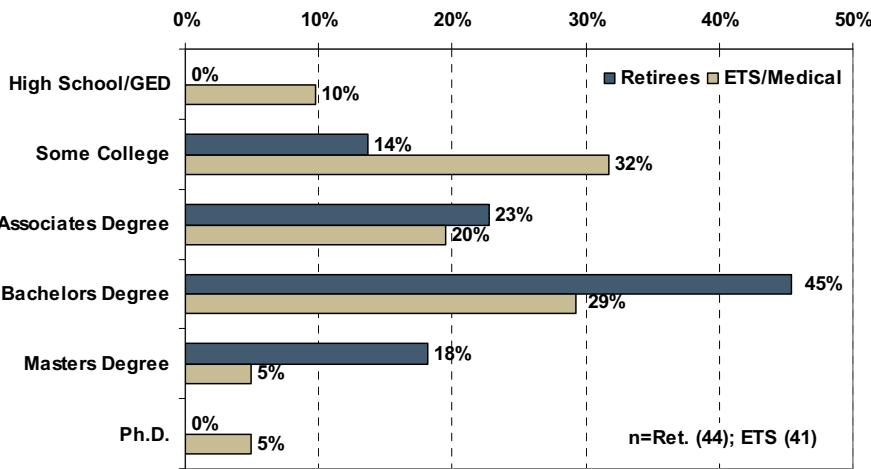
Among the retirement-eligible respondents, 70 percent indicated they would stay for a good job. About one-third of non-retirees responded in the affirmative. Retirees are likely to have lived in the Wichita Falls region for a longer period than non-retirees and are therefore more familiar and comfortable with its quality of life.

Q5. What is your highest level of education completed?



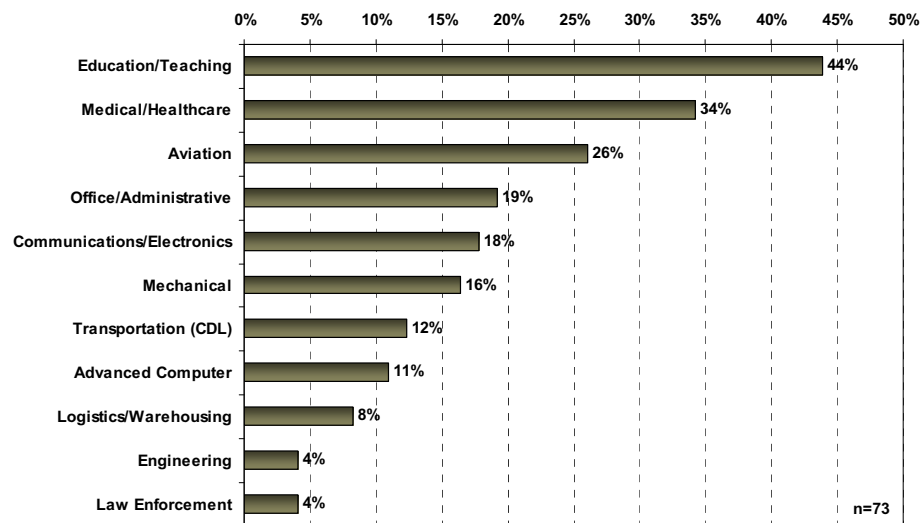
The airmen and officers participating in the survey possess an exceptionally high level of educational attainment. Almost three-quarters of the respondents have earned a post-secondary degree. An additional 22 percent report some college experience, while only five percent have no college experience. Slightly over half report achieving a bachelors degree or higher. In comparison, as of the 2000 Census, 19 percent of the Wichita Falls MSA population age 25 or older had attained a bachelors degree or higher.

Q5. What is your highest level of education completed?



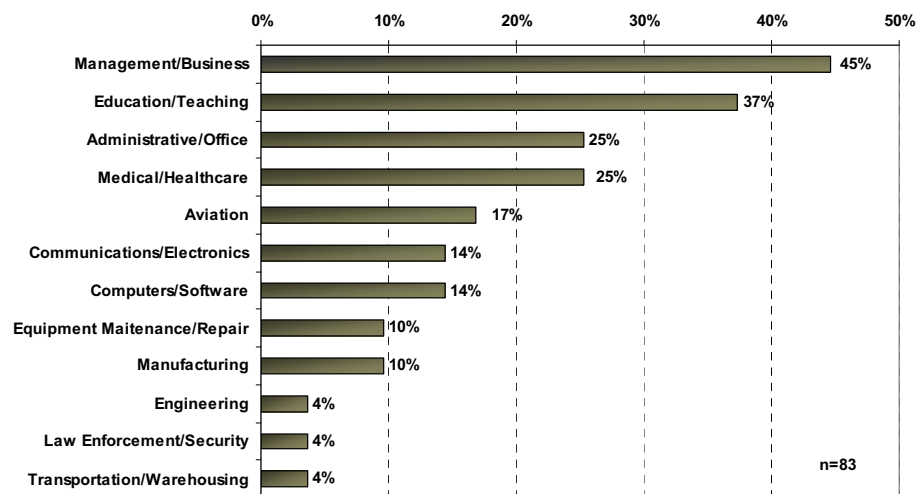
The survey data show that 86 percent of retirees have earned a post-secondary degree. Among ETS/medical respondents, 54 percent report having a post-secondary degree, with another 32 percent possessing some college experience.

Q6. Please mark any area in which you hold a technical/professional certificate.



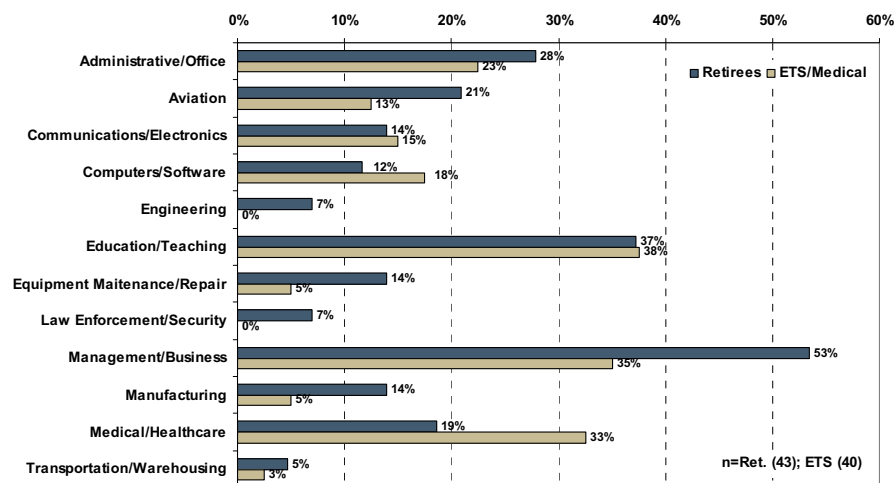
Of those respondents possessing a technical or professional certification, the most frequently reported specializations were education & teaching, medical & healthcare, aviation, office & administrative, communications & electronics, and mechanical. Given the primary training missions of the 80th and 82nd Wings at SAFB, especially in the aircraft maintenance and medical fields, these results are expected.

Q7. What type of post-military employment do YOU desire?



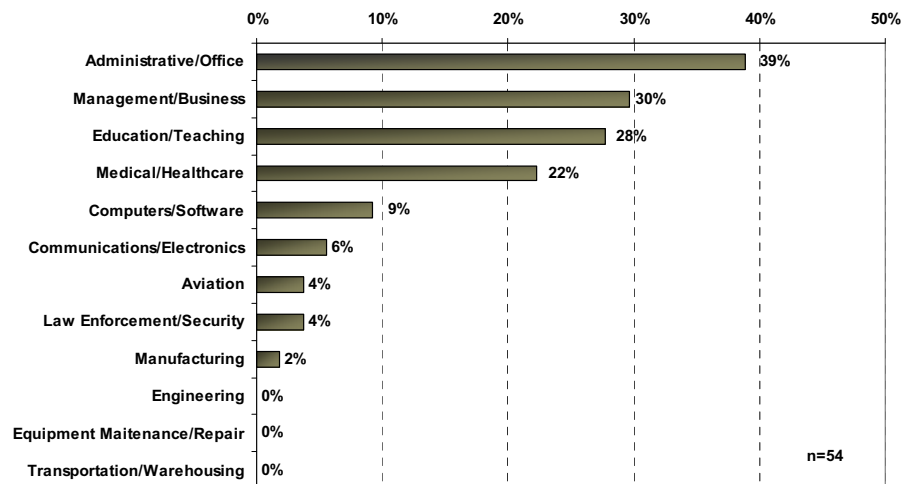
Post-military careers in management & business and education & teaching were the most favored preferred by respondents. The administrative & office and medical & healthcare fields tied for the third most desired post-military careers. These results indicate SAFB is continually strengthening the pool of workers available to the region's Professional Services sector, as well as area school districts and higher education institutions. The preference for healthcare careers is likely to diminish once the medical training units at SAFB are relocated to Fort Sam Houston.

Q7. What type of post-military employment do YOU desire?



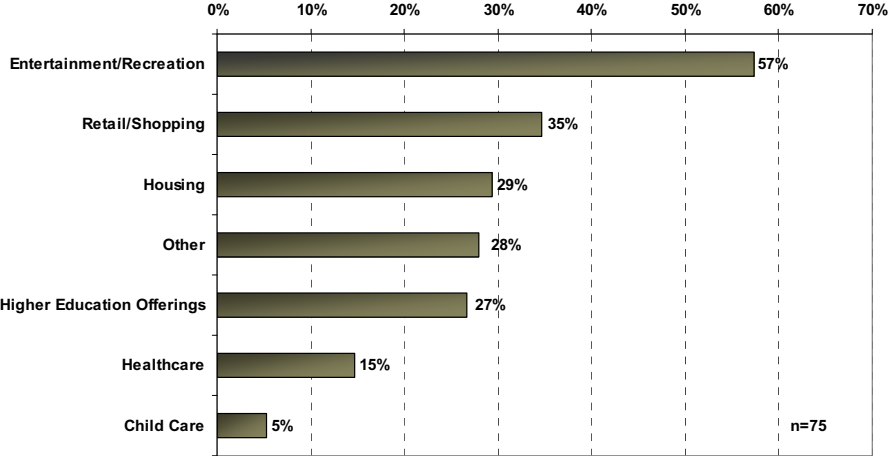
Non-retirees reported education & teaching as their most desired profession (38 percent), while retirees chose the management & business field most often (53 percent).

Q8. What type of employment does your SPOUSE desire?



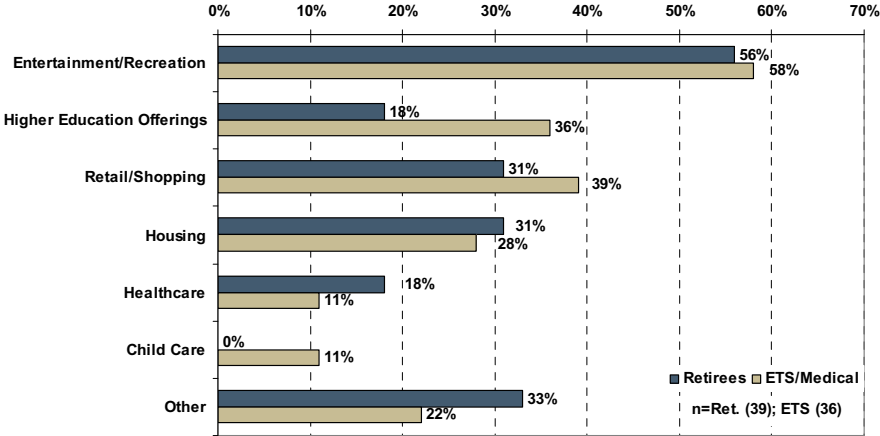
When asked about their spouses' employment desires, the respondents most often cited the administrative & office, management & business, education & teaching, and medical & healthcare fields.

Q9. Improvements in which other area would most positively affect your decision to remain in the region?



Improvements to entertainment and recreation in the community were cited most often by airmen and officers as the quality of life factor that would most affect their decision to remain in the region. Expanding and enhancing retail opportunities in the region was cited as the second-highest quality of life need. Improving child care options was cited least often.

Q9. Improvements in which other area would most positively affect your decision to remain in the region?



When filtered by reason for leaving the military, a desire for more entertainment and recreation is still cited most frequently by both retirees and non-retirees. Of note, higher education offerings ranked third among non-retirees.

Appendix C: Entrepreneurial Assessment

en·tre·pre·neur
(ŏn'trə-prə-nûr', -nöö'r) n.

A person who organizes, operates, and assumes the risk for a business venture.

French, from *entreprendre*, *to undertake*.

SOURCE: *American Heritage Dictionary*.

Across the nation, economic developers have embraced entrepreneur development as a means of promoting economic diversification and stimulating economic growth. The reason for this interest in entrepreneurs is two-fold: (1) an economic transition in the US has created more market opportunities for entrepreneurs and (2) the recognition entrepreneurs can be more deeply rooted in their communities, which increases both their economic and social impacts.

Purpose and Methodology

As part of the Defense Diversification Plan for the City of Wichita Falls, the consulting team was asked to assess the ability of Wichita Falls to support entrepreneurs. To do this, the consulting team conducted interviews with the services providers and a focus group with local small business owners and entrepreneurs. With this information, the consulting team mapped Wichita Falls' entrepreneurial assets and identified gaps. Strategies were then developed to address these gaps and strengthen the entrepreneurial climate in the community. The strategies are presented in 20/20 VISION, Business Development, Strategy 5.

The entrepreneurial assets of a community can be divided into four principal categories (see figure below): (1) Capital; (2) Business Services; (3) Education & Information Programs; and (4) Talent.

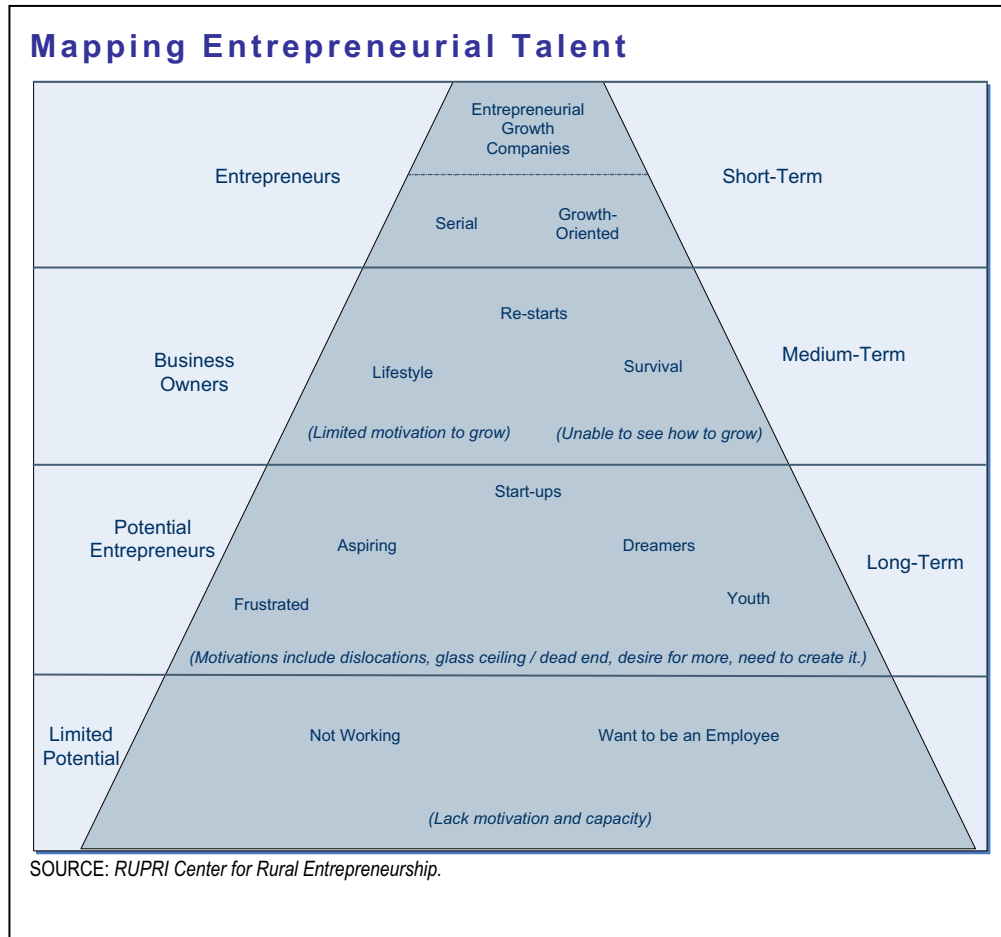
For the purpose of this assessment, the consulting team focused on the first three categories because entrepreneurial assets that fall into the "Talent" category can be developed through well-targeted education and information programs. However, to provide a framework for the assessment, it is important to distinguish between the different types of entrepreneurial talent. Some individuals are more disposed to taking on the risk associated with starting a new business venture than others. Among those who are willing to assume the risk, those who have the motivation to grow their business and the capacity to do so are the true entrepreneurs who will have the highest impact on the community. The types of talent have different needs and require different levels of intervention (education and support) to convert them to true entrepreneurs. The types of entrepreneurial

Entrepreneurial Asset Checklist

CAPITAL	BUSINESS SERVICES	EDUCATION & INFORMATION PROGRAMS
<input type="checkbox"/> Literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Microlending <input type="checkbox"/> Revolving Loan Funds <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Lenders <input type="checkbox"/> State/Federal Program Linkages <input type="checkbox"/> Angel Investors <input type="checkbox"/> Seed Capital <input type="checkbox"/> Venture Capital	<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting <input type="checkbox"/> Legal <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Financing <input type="checkbox"/> Business Transfer Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Production <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing <input type="checkbox"/> Market Identification & Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Mentor / peer groups <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Awareness Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Training <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing <input type="checkbox"/> Business Plan Development <input type="checkbox"/> Feasibility Studies <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Specialized Assistance

SOURCE: RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship.

talent are displayed in the following figure. The level each type holds on the pyramid represents the relative size of the talent pool.



Potential entrepreneurs are those individuals who could become entrepreneurs but need education and support to improve their capacity to become entrepreneurs. Youth, aspiring entrepreneurs, and some start-ups fall into this category. This group requires a relatively high level of intervention and outcomes from programs targeting these groups will be over a longer time horizon.

Business owners are primarily motivated to open and operate a business to achieve economic self-sufficiency independent of an employer. Many business owners lack the motivation or the capacity (or both) to grow. They are primarily focused on creating a stable livelihood for themselves and their families. While some business owners could become more growth-oriented with the support and education of an entrepreneurship program, many are content with their businesses as they are or are too busy “surviving” to see growth opportunities. The level of intervention required by this group is lower than the potential entrepreneurs. In addition, programs that target these groups will begin to achieve outcomes over the medium-term.

Entrepreneurs are risk-takers who recognize market opportunities and design business ventures to capitalize upon these opportunities. They are focused on growth and have the motivation and capacity to achieve it. Entrepreneurship programs designed to target this group have the lowest level of intervention, the shortest time horizon for realizing results, the highest potential impact, and the lowest cost.

Asset Mapping

Wichita Falls has a relatively comprehensive infrastructure to support businesses owners. However, its support network for entrepreneurs should be expanded to foster more high growth business ventures.

The region is fortunate to have three organizations that form the nexus of education and information programs and disseminate information regarding access to other entrepreneurial assets. These organizations each have a different focus and collaborate regularly to provide a continuum of services to potential entrepreneurs, small business owners, and entrepreneurs. The organizations are:

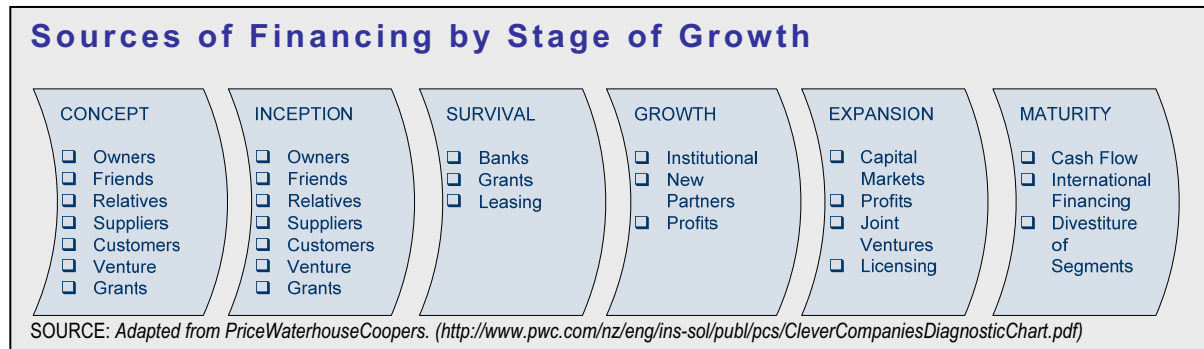
- The **Small Business Development Center (SBDC)**, a partnership between the US Small Business Administration (SBA) and Midwestern State University, focuses on providing one-on-one counseling and workshops for business owners and potential entrepreneurs. It is a sub-center of the North West Texas SBDC Region Network.
- The **Board of Commerce and Industry (BCI)** Chamber Services focuses on providing marketing and networking opportunities for existing businesses. These opportunities are open to all BCI members.
- The **Lalani Center for Entrepreneurship and Free Enterprise**, which is part of the Dillard School of Business at Midwestern State University, will be primarily focused on the study, promotion, and cultivation of entrepreneurial and innovative activities in the Wichita Falls region. This center was created in 2006 and is in the process of developing its programs and hiring staff.

In the following sections, the consulting team presents its assessment of Wichita Falls' assets by category type and highlights any gaps that exist.



CAPITAL

Entrepreneurs need access to capital that is appropriate for the stage of growth that their business is in. Start-ups have different financing needs than established businesses. These financing needs are met through a variety of mechanisms from friends and family investment pools to debt issuances in international financial markets. The various financing sources are presented on the chart below by each stage of business growth.



Venture Capital / Seed Funding

Entrepreneurial companies typically depend on venture capital to fund their needs through the concept and inception stages of growth. Venture capital is primarily available through “angel” investors and venture capital funds. The term “angel” refers to high-net worth individuals, or “accredited investors,” who typically invest in and support start-up companies in their early stages of growth.

In Wichita Falls, an informal angel investor network exists that provides early-stage funding for promising entrepreneurs. Formalizing this network could enhance this type of capital's accessibility and grow the base of “angels” as more investors become aware of investment opportunities in the regional economy.

Among their many benefits, formal angel investor networks provide opportunities for investors to pool their resources to support a wider range of financing needs in their region. A helpful guide for creating a network can be found here: http://www.kauffman.org/pdf/angel_guidebook.pdf.

Three Things to Know about Capital

1. **Venture capitalists rarely invest outside of a two to four hour drive of the investor's office.** These investors need access to the entrepreneurs and management of the companies they are working with. Good investors are actively involved in helping the company succeed by adding management talent, making introductions to potential partners and continuing to find other potential investors to lower the risk of failure.
2. **Venture capital does not just happen in urban areas.** There are groups that only invest in rural areas such as Meritus Ventures out of Kentucky and Tennessee and Sustainable Job Fund Ventures based in Durham, North Carolina and New York.
3. **Banks typically do not lend money to entrepreneurs in early stages especially companies working with intellectual property.** An overwhelming majority of people think the only source of capital for entrepreneurs is a bank. In fact, most banks do not lend money to entrepreneurs who lack a certain net worth or entrepreneurs who usually lack any collateral that can be used as a guarantee of the loan.

Banking Services

For later stage businesses in need of bank loans and lines of credit, Wichita Falls is home to many banks, including most large national commercial banks and a number of local banks. The local banks include American National Bank, First Bank, First National Bank of Wichita Falls, State National Bank of Texas, and Wichita National Bank at Stone Lake. Generally, a strong presence of local banks positively contributes to the entrepreneurial climate of a community because the de-centralized, less automated underwriting process of local banks (in comparison to that of national banks) allows more flexible lending practices that can be tailored to the needs of local entrepreneurs.

In spite of the presence of numerous banks in the area, *the SBDC noted that it refers up to 70% of its clients to out-of-town financial institutions for funding.* Many start-ups are referred to ACCION Texas, a non-profit microlender headquartered in San Antonio, Texas. Non-bank SBA loans are generally referred to a company in Florida. We recognize the inherent risk in loans to start-ups and know that most commercial banks do not lend to start-ups as a general policy. However, the referral of SBDC clients outside of the area indicates the local financial community is not as supportive of entrepreneurs as it could be.

To address this issue, many communities create revolving loan funds to support entrepreneurs that do not have access to capital through traditional resources. Often these funds are capitalized with contributions and low-interest loans from traditional financial institutions operating in the community as well other sources including city governments and grants from the SBA. Typically, a committee composed of local business bankers reviews and makes decisions on loans applications. Such programs can help local entrepreneurs access credit and establish a credit history while spreading risk among multiple institutions. Financial institutions benefit from their participation because they receive Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) credits and because such programs help to increase the pool of "bankable" potential clients that may eventually need the services of the local financial institutions.

Literacy

The SBDC sponsors workshops to educate their clients on obtaining a bank loan. In addition, they provide limited loan packaging assistance through partnerships with ACCION Texas and SBA lenders. However, education programs on other types of financing are not currently offered on a regular basis.

Training Curricula

One popular entrepreneurial training program is **FastTrac**. Founded by the Kauffman Foundation of Kansas City, Missouri, FastTrac is a boot camp for entrepreneurs. According to the foundation's materials, 70 percent of companies that go through the program succeed beyond three years – the oft-touted threshold by which the majority of small businesses fail. The program can be brought to any town provided there is an organization willing to become certified to teach the program. <http://www.fasttrac.org/>

Another popular program is **NxLevel**, a curriculum developed by the University of Colorado at Denver. NxLevel includes 7 different curriculum tailored for different types of entrepreneurs. Since 1996, over 80,000 students have participated in NxLevel trainings. A third-party evaluation of the program shows that over 90 percent of business start-ups that participated in the program were still in business after 3 years. The program is taught by certified trainers in over 600 communities in 48 states. <http://www.nxlevel.org/>

BUSINESS SERVICES

A complete range of services typically needed by business owners exists in Wichita Falls. If a service is not offered by a company physically located in Wichita Falls, it is at least accessible on-line or in the Dallas-Ft Worth area.

The BCI's annual business expo, called World of Opportunity, helps to educate entrepreneurs and business owners of the services available locally. The 2007 event showcased over 100 businesses and was a valuable resource for bringing together business owners and service providers.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Training & Technical Assistance

The SBDC, BCI, the Dillard School of Business at MSU, and Vernon College provide training for entrepreneurs and business owners. Workshops and classes range from how to start a small business to graduate level business administration classes.

The SBDC and BCI often work together closely, co-sponsoring and cross-marketing workshops to each others clients and membership. Focus group participants spoke highly of the workshop but did note a need for more training on marketing "on a shoe-string" and customer service.

In addition, focus group participants noted many entrepreneurs and business owners do not have business succession plans, which has recently resulted in the closure of some long-standing local businesses. The SBDC and BCI should consider offering a workshop to educate participants on the importance of succession planning.

The higher education classes offered through local institutions cover the range of finance, accounting, marketing, and management typically offered by business schools. The Dillard School of Business offers students the opportunity to concentrate on accounting, economics, finance, general business, management, marketing, and MIS. The MBA program also offers specialization in MIS and health services.

There are currently no intensive entrepreneur training programs offered in Wichita Falls. A number of excellent curricula exist that educate potential entrepreneurs and start-ups on the basics of entrepreneurship. Two popular curricula are FastTrac and NxLevel.

EXAMPLE: Mentoring

North Carolina's Blue Ridge Entrepreneurial Council (BREC) connects local entrepreneurs with mentors during a monthly breakfast meeting. Called the **Mentor BRECfast**, the meetings feature a single mentor addressing topics such as marketing, sales, cash flow and other topics of interest to aspiring entrepreneurs. Mentor BRECfast meetings frequently lead to direct mentoring relationships between the presenter and one or more attendees. (<http://www.brecnc.com/>)

A growing number of for-profit services are available to help connect entrepreneurs with potential mentors. One example is Minneapolis-based **Menttium**, which provides mentoring services to "high-performing female talent." Programs include a year-long program designed to match protégés across the country with mentors based on a rigorous screening process.

The SBDC provides one-on-one counseling and technical assistance for their clients. They have a staff of seven, including 3 business development specialists and 1 business research analyst that provide specialized services for potential entrepreneurs and business owners. Through their association with the North West Texas SBDC, clients can access the services of the Northwest Texas Business Industry Data Center, which provides research services to improve clients' understanding of their markets and trends.

Youth Entrepreneurship Training

Although Wichita Falls ISD offers vocational training in construction, auto collision, machining technology, cosmetology, electronics, and welding, it does not have any kind of entrepreneurship training or program. The National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (<http://www.nfte.com/>) and other organizations (http://www.extension.org/pages/Seeding_a_Successful_Future:_Youth_Entrepreneurship) have created programs and designed curricula targeted for stimulating youth entrepreneurship. In addition, many local Cooperative Extension offices play a role in developing youth entrepreneurship programs in schools.

Networking & Mentoring

BCI provides numerous networking opportunities for its members. These opportunities include weekly leads groups, a monthly "Business After-Hours", and a monthly "Wake-Up Wichita Falls." In addition, the BCI sponsors periodic events that provide networking opportunities such as the World of Opportunity business expo, the Better Business Bureau Torch Awards Luncheon, an annual golf tournament, and an annual membership meeting.

Successful entrepreneurs often cite their mentors as "the secret to their success." Communities across the nation have found that facilitating a mentor network for entrepreneurs can be an effective and relatively low-cost way to enhance the entrepreneurial climate. Currently, Wichita Falls does not have a formal mentor network that matches up entrepreneurs with successful mentors.

Access to Information

In many communities, service providers find reaching business owners and entrepreneurs very difficult. Likewise, entrepreneurs and business owners find it difficult to locate needed services. One solution embraced in some communities is the creation of a one-stop center. In Tuscaloosa, Alabama, the Chamber houses the One-Stop Center (<http://www.youronestopcenter.com/index.php>) providing business owners with access to multiple services providers and knowledge of how to navigate the licensing and permitting process to set up their businesses as well as the forms to do

so. These one-stop centers can serve as a central clearinghouse of information to support entrepreneurship in the community and region and can facilitate the process of setting up a new business.

Conclusion

Wichita Falls has a relatively comprehensive range of assets to support potential entrepreneurs and business owners. However, to enhance the community's support of high-growth entrepreneurs, these assets should be augmented. The Defense Diversification Plan: Final Report (pages 28-31) presents strategies to address the gaps summarized below.

Asset Category	Existing	Gaps
Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local banks Informal Angel Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community-based Revolving Loan Fund Formal Angel Network Financial Literacy Training
Business Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal Accounting Marketing Human Resources Information Technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None found
Education & Information Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops One-on-one Counseling Networking Opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entrepreneur Boot Camp Youth Entrepreneurship Education Program Mentor Network One-Stop Shop

Appendix D: Community Needs Assessment

The major assessment findings are discussed in this section. The assessment is organized into three topic areas: Talent, Industry & Innovation, and Place. These topic areas represent the new economic development model that emphasizes economic vitality as much as economic growth.

The full economic and demographic assessment can be found in the separate data presentation.

TALENT

To provide a context for understanding demographic trends in Wichita Falls, the consulting team chose five peer communities (MSAs): Dothan, Alabama; Lawton, Oklahoma; San Angelo, Texas; Tyler, Texas; and Valdosta, Georgia.

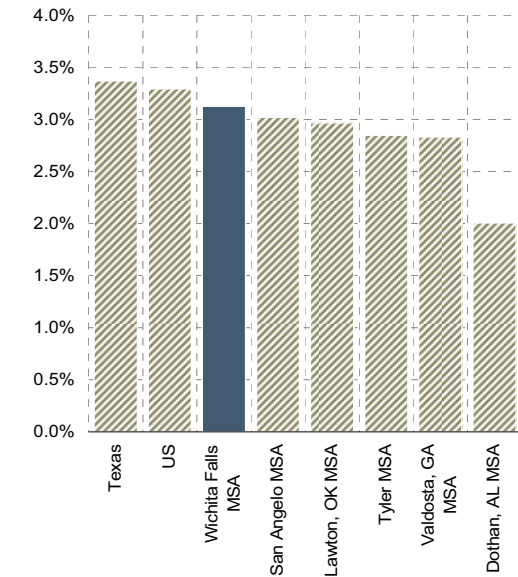
- Dothan, Lawton, San Angelo, and Valdosta were chosen because each is located near a strong military training facility/mission. The installations are focused on a single military branch. In addition, four out of five of the installations experienced a net employment loss over the past 10 years.
- Tyler was chosen because of its similar distance from D/FW as Wichita Falls and its role as a regional commercial and higher education center.

The table below summarizes the attributes of the peer communities.

MSA	Military Presence	Non-Coastal Location	Similar Population Size	Beyond Commuting Distance from a Major MSA	Base	MSA Population	DoD Jobs	DoD Jobs / Total Labor Force
Wichita Falls, Texas	✓	✓	✓	✓	Sheppard AFB	145,528	8,464	10.2%
Dothan, Alabama	✓	✓	✓	✓	Fort Rucker	138,234	6,370	9.0%
Lawton, Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓	✓	Fort Sill	109,181	16,683	27.9%
San Angelo, Texas	✓	✓	✓	✓	Goodfellow AFB	105,752	3,289	5.8%
Tyler, Texas	—	✓	✓	✓	—	194,635	—	—
Valdosta, Georgia	✓	✓	✓	✓	Moody AFB	126,305	4,038	5.7%

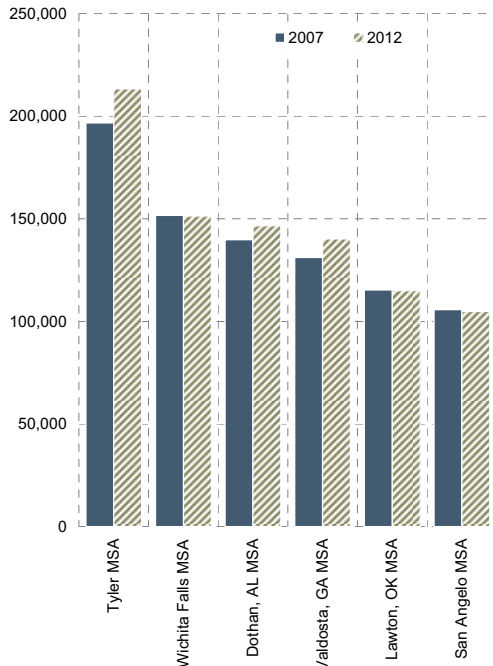
SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau; U.S. Department of Defense; Globalsecurity.org; TIP Strategies

**Median Household Income Growth (CAGR*),
2007-2012**



SOURCE: ESRI
*compound annual growth rate

Population of Wichita Falls & Peers



SOURCE: ESRI

APPENDIX D - COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

In comparison to its peers, Wichita Falls has:

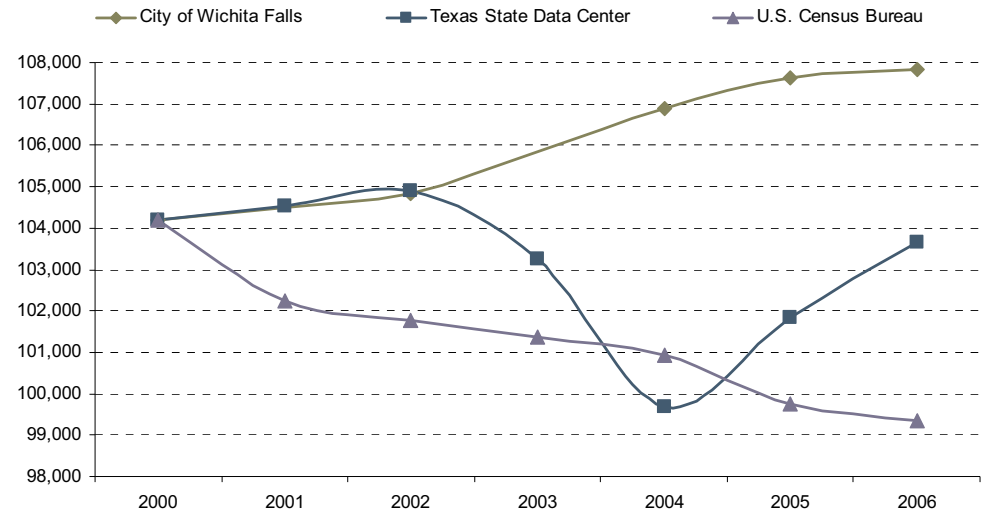
- A projected household income growth that is the highest of peer group (2007–12). (*right*)
- A higher median household income (\$42,139) than San Angelo (\$40,949), Valdosta (\$38,583) and Dothan (\$37,159).
- A higher share of adults who have completed high school (31%) than Texas (25%) and the U.S. (29%). Yet, Wichita Falls lags the state and nation in terms of share of adults who have completed college.
- Fewer low income households than peers (26% of households with income <\$25K).
- A more affordable housing stock than the peer communities, Texas, and the U.S.

There are, however, some areas of concern revealed by the demographic assessment.

- Population growth in Wichita Falls is expected to remain flat over the next five years. In contrast, Tyler, Dothan and Valdosta are all expected to grow. This population data is from the US Census and ESRI. However, population estimates for Wichita Falls vary. As part of the assessment, the consulting team was asked to evaluate various methodologies for estimating city-level population. A detailed description of the methodologies is contained in *Population Assessment* document.
- The graphic illustrates the 2000-2006 population estimates calculated by the four sources: the City of Wichita Falls, the consulting team's revised estimates based on the City's methodologies, the Texas State Data Center (TSDC), and the U.S. Census Bureau. The City estimate is actually an average of three other methodologies that are based on occupied housing units, water connections, and school enrollment. The City of Wichita Falls, the most optimistic of the three sources, estimates an average population growth rate of 3.5 percent from 2000 to 2006. The TSDC estimates the Wichita Falls's population fell by 0.5 percent. The Census Bureau estimates a 4.4 percent decline in population over the first six years of the decade. In contrast, the state of Texas grew 12.7 percent over the same period.

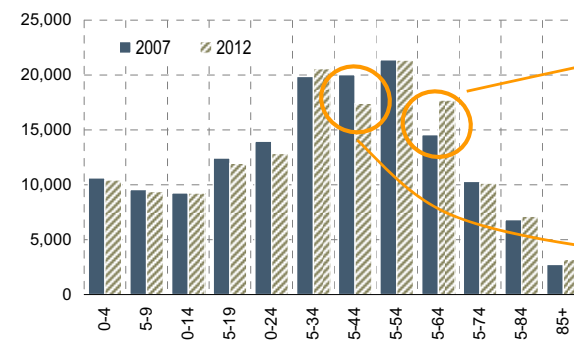
Regardless of which methodology and source is the most accurate, all three reveal either negative or relatively flat growth during the period.

**Summary of Population Estimation Methods
City of Wichita Falls, 2000-2006**



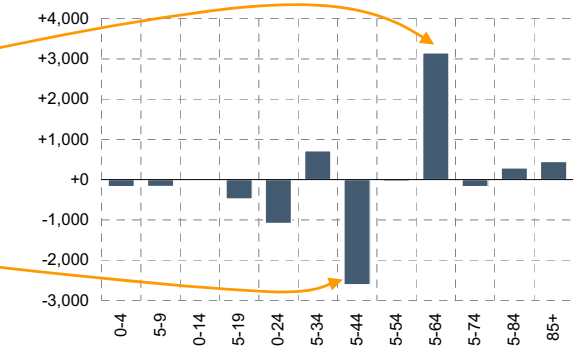
As shown below, the aging of Wichita Falls' population is evident. Age-cohort growth across the US is often skewed by aging Baby Boomers (a large group) and Gen-Xers entering middle-age (a much smaller group). In the Wichita Falls MSA, however, the differential in growth is even more notable than usual. It is important for planners and economic developers to view these demographic shifts in terms of (1) the impact on workforce availability and experience (2) the composition of housing needs (3) the demand for healthcare and long-term care services and (4) the impact on school enrollment.

Wichita Falls's Population by Age Cohort



SOURCE: ESRI

Wichita Falls's Net Population Chg. by Age Cohort, 2007-2012



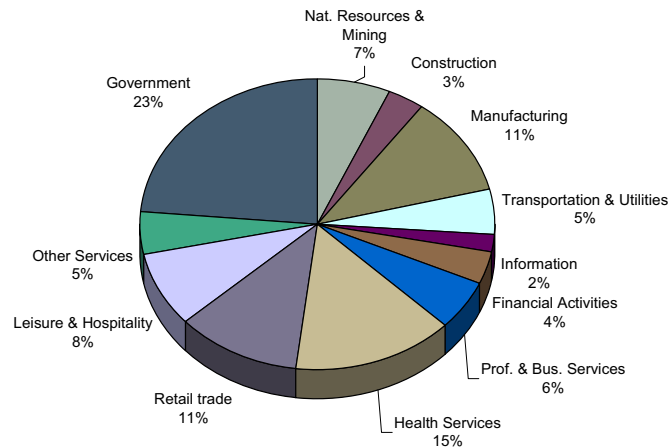
SOURCE: ESRI

- Increasingly, employers (both U.S. and foreign-owned) are relocating or expanding to areas that offer an available and skilled workforce (i.e., talent). In many regions and industry sectors, this phenomenon has become known as “the war for talent.” For regional centers such as Wichita Falls, the ability to attract and retain talent is of critical importance. The above statistics demonstrate quantitatively that talent attraction and retention is a primary challenge for the Wichita Falls region. Participants in the consulting team’s employer focus groups provided qualitative confirmation of Wichita Falls’s talent challenge.
- Representatives from the manufacturing and healthcare sectors as well as local human resource professionals noted that finding good employees to fill job openings was their number one challenge.
 - Manufacturers agreed recruiting engineers and other professionals to Wichita Falls is difficult largely because of the image recruits hold of the city and community.

The lack of entertainment options and spousal work opportunities (perceived or real) exacerbates this challenge.

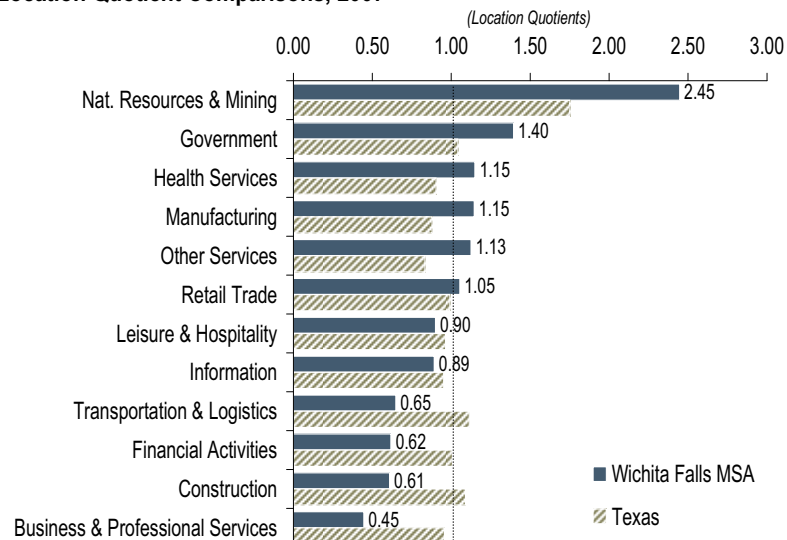
- The healthcare sector is challenged by a shortage in multiple professions including physicians, RNs, and therapists (occupational, speech, & physical). Their difficulty in recruiting and retaining these professionals revolves around Wichita Falls's less competitive wages in this sector. The Medicare Wage Index is 0.8, which signifies that the average local healthcare wages pay 80 percent of the average national healthcare wages.
- Filling low-skilled and unskilled positions is also difficult. The manufacturers commented they often needed as many as 30 applicants to fill one line position. All employers cited that applicants often fail to pass initial drug tests and background screening. More than once attendees commented that "everyone who wants to work is already working."
- This local *war for talent* makes it difficult for Wichita Falls employers to maintain current operational levels and could curtail future expansion plans.
- In addition to the talent challenge local employers face, a number of stakeholders cited a shortage of younger civic leaders. Although the community has a strong heritage of civic leadership and engagement, many claim a new generation of leaders has not emerged. This deficiency (perceived or real) may worsen in the future if the area's population continues to age.

Wichita Falls MSA Employment by Industry, 2007



SOURCE: Economy.com

Location Quotient Comparisons, 2007



Sources: Economy.com (data); TIP Strategies (calculations)

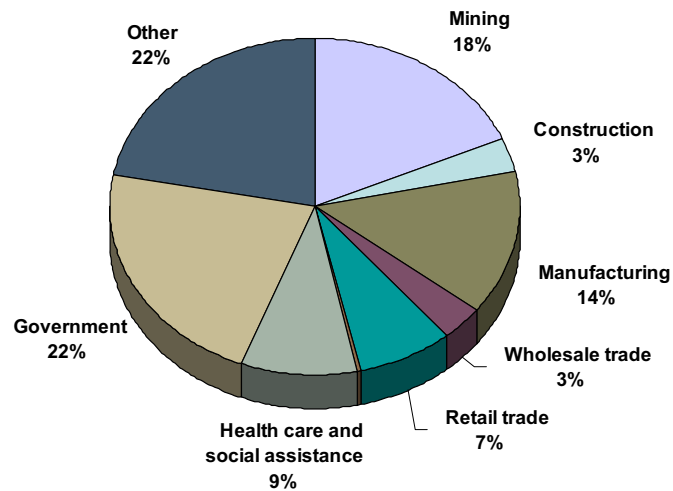
INDUSTRY & INNOVATION

For the economic assessment, the consulting team examined employment and industry data to identify Wichita Falls's competitive advantages, industry clusters, and workforce needs.

- The Wichita Falls metro economy is relatively diversified. The public sector accounts for over 20 percent of the area's jobs and includes Sheppard AFB, Wichita Falls ISD, North Texas State Hospital, the City of Wichita Falls, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, and Midwestern State University. Among its major private sector employers are United Regional Healthcare, Howmet, AT&T, Work Services Corp, and Saint Gobain-Vetrotex.

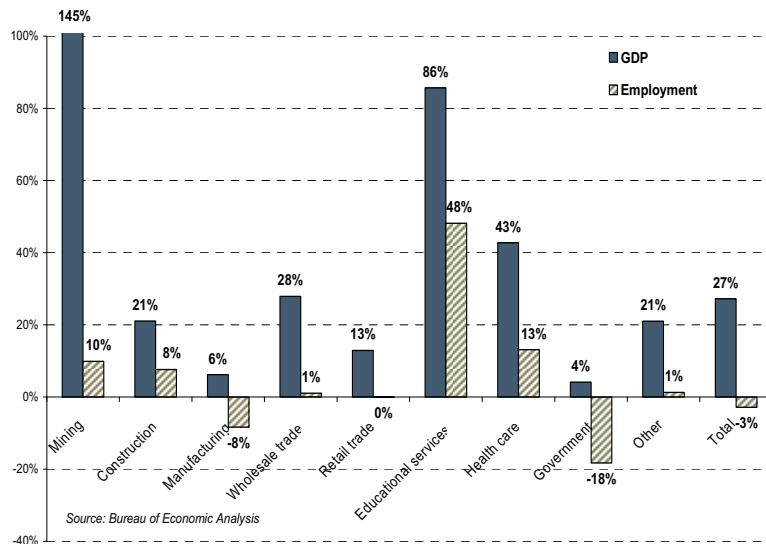
- The metro economy has higher than average concentrations of employment in the natural resources and mining, government, health services, and manufacturing sectors.
- In addition, Wichita Falls has high concentrations of workers with occupations valuable to energy, manufacturing, and healthcare sectors.

Wichita Falls MSA GDP by Industry, 2005



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

- The government and energy sectors remain the two most significant economic engines within the Wichita Falls metro economy. Together, government and mining, which includes oil and gas production, accounted for 40 percent of the area's gross domestic product in 2005.
- Manufacturing contributed 14 percent of the region's total economic output, while health care services added 9 percent.

Percentage Growth in GDP & Employment, 2001-2005
Wichita Falls MSA


Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

- From 2001-2005, total GDP for the MSA increased by 27 percent, while total employment declined by 3 percent.
- Manufacturing GDP grew by 6 percent, at the same time manufacturing employment fell by 8 percent.
- Mining GDP, which includes oil & gas production, surged by 145 percent. Much of the rise in regional energy production is due to the presence of the Barnett Shale, discovered in Wise County in 1981. Some estimate the Barnett Shale is the largest onshore natural gas field in the United States

Median Salaries for Primary Occupational Groups

Wichita Falls MSA

Occupational group	Local Median Salary	% of U.S. Median
Management	\$61,010	75%
Life, physical, & social sciences	\$51,450	97%
Computer & mathematical	\$46,810	71%
Architecture & engineering	\$45,190	72%
Business & financial	\$43,710	81%
Education & training	\$38,490	94%
Healthcare - technical	\$37,950	73%
Installation, maintenance, & repair	\$35,700	97%
Legal	\$30,560	45%
Protective services	\$29,330	91%
Production	\$26,850	98%
Construction & extraction	\$26,100	74%
All Occupations	\$24,790	82%
Office & administrative	\$22,770	81%
Design, entertainment, & media	\$22,660	59%
Community & social services	\$22,640	63%
Transportation & material-moving	\$22,590	89%
Sales	\$19,270	83%
Ag & forestry*	\$18,320	102%
Healthcare - support	\$18,240	80%
Cleaning & property maintenance	\$17,950	88%
Personal care & services	\$14,880	78%
Food preparation & serving	\$13,890	85%

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006 data released May 17, 2007

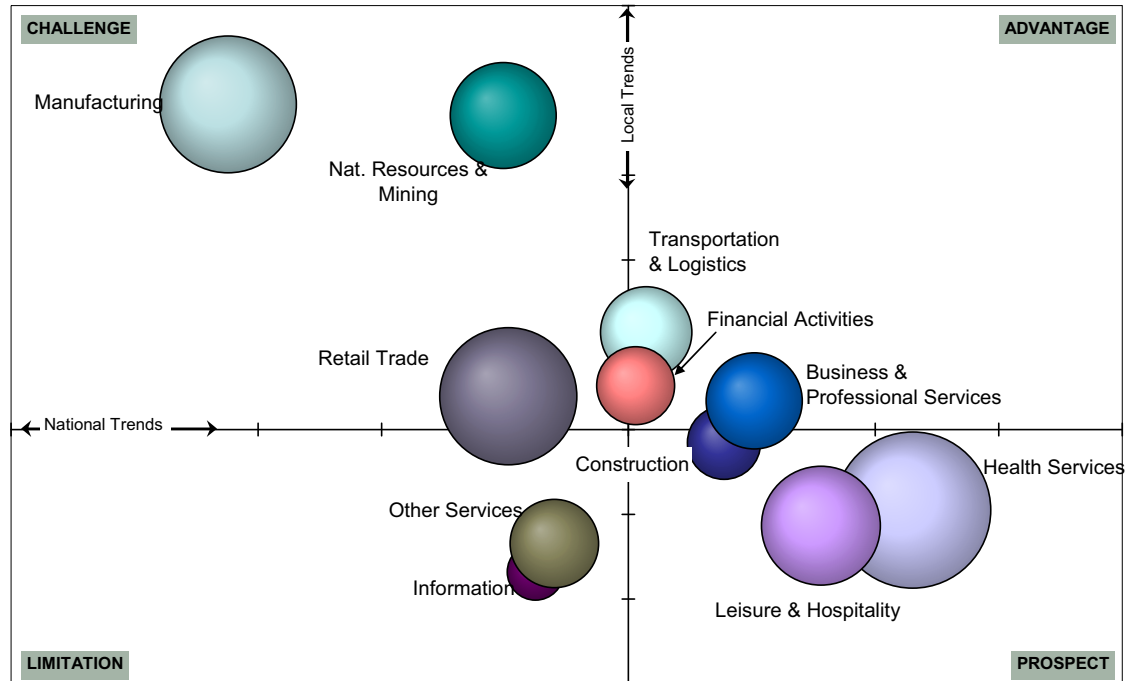
*nonfarm

- Non-competitive wages are a significant barrier to both talent attraction and retention.
- The median salaries for all primary occupational groups fall below the U.S. Median. A number of stakeholders have recounted talent migrating from Wichita Falls due to better economic opportunities and higher wages elsewhere.
- Wichita Falls' wages fall below the state average in higher paid occupations such as business & finance, legal, architecture, engineering, computer, and management.

Shift-Share Analysis allocates changes in employment among three “shares”: national, industry, and regional share. It provides a means for identifying industries that are growing nationally and for which a region may have competitive advantage.

A shift-share analysis of the Wichita Falls MSA's employment sectors identifies the health services, leisure & hospitality, and business and professional services sectors as areas performing well nationally and underperforming locally. These sectors represent potential prospects for the region to expand. While the natural resources & mining sector is facing challenging conditions at the national level, Wichita Falls, because of its strong energy sector, enjoys a competitive advantage in this sector.

Wichita Falls MSA Shift-Share, 2003-2007



Sources: Economy.com (data); TIP Strategies (calculations)

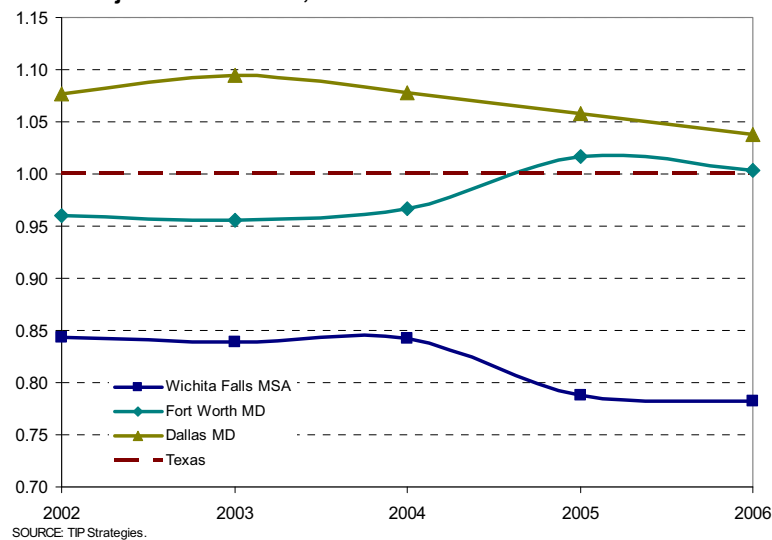
- The health services sector, in particular, holds strong potential for Wichita Falls. As mentioned earlier, the area's aging population will lead to an increased demand for health services.
 - Officials at Sheppard AFB indicated that non-hospital health services in Wichita Falls may already be in short supply. Base officials are growing increasingly reliant on local civilian providers to care for military employees and dependents. There is some concern as to whether local health care providers can meet the current and future health care needs of military families.
- The potential for the leisure and hospitality sector in the region is more limited. The area's major tourism draw is the annual *Hotter 'n Hell* cycling event, which draws over 10,000 riders to the city. However, commercial activity connected to this event is primarily restricted to one weekend a year.
 - This sector, however, has experienced significant recent growth with the opening of at least five new lodging facilities. This growth in the hospitality sector is, for the most part, replacing outdated facilities. However, some of this growth may possibly be associated with the opening of the American Indian tribal casinos just across the state line in Oklahoma.
- The business and professional services sector is another area in which Wichita Falls holds a competitive advantage. This is also the sector that holds the most promise for revitalizing downtown because growth in this sector will inevitably stimulate demand for office space. In addition, it is an area in which wages lag the state average – most likely due to an oversupply of workers. Thus, growth in this sector could help raise wages in this sector and strengthen downtown.
- While not an industry sector, entrepreneurship holds much potential for bolstering and diversifying the Wichita Falls economy. In the interviews and focus group conducted to assess the local entrepreneurial climate, Wichita Falls is, in general, supportive of its entrepreneurs. The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) caters its services to start-up businesses, offering technical assistance and one-on-one counseling. BCI's Chamber Services focuses on existing businesses, offering networking opportunities and providing marketing opportunities. MSU's new Lalani Center for Entrepreneurship and Free Enterprise at the Dillard School of Business will be geared towards student entrepreneurs and eventually high-growth entrepreneurs, with a business incubator and accelerator as well as an advanced curriculum.
 - Like most communities, access to capital is the number one issue facing entrepreneurs. Wichita Falls is fortunate to have a number of locally-owned financial institutions.

However, business must look outside of Wichita Falls for start-up financing, microloans as well as seed funding. A revolving loan fund in which local financial institutions participate would provide support for higher risk loans (start-ups & small) while spreading risk for the lenders. For seed funding, angel investors exist in the community and the capital is present, but there is no formal network by which to access this capital. A formal angel network should be created.

- The entrepreneurs that participated in the focus group cited the importance of mentors in building a successful business. Although the SBDC mentioned that plans to start a formal mentor network have been discussed, the plans have not been finalized.

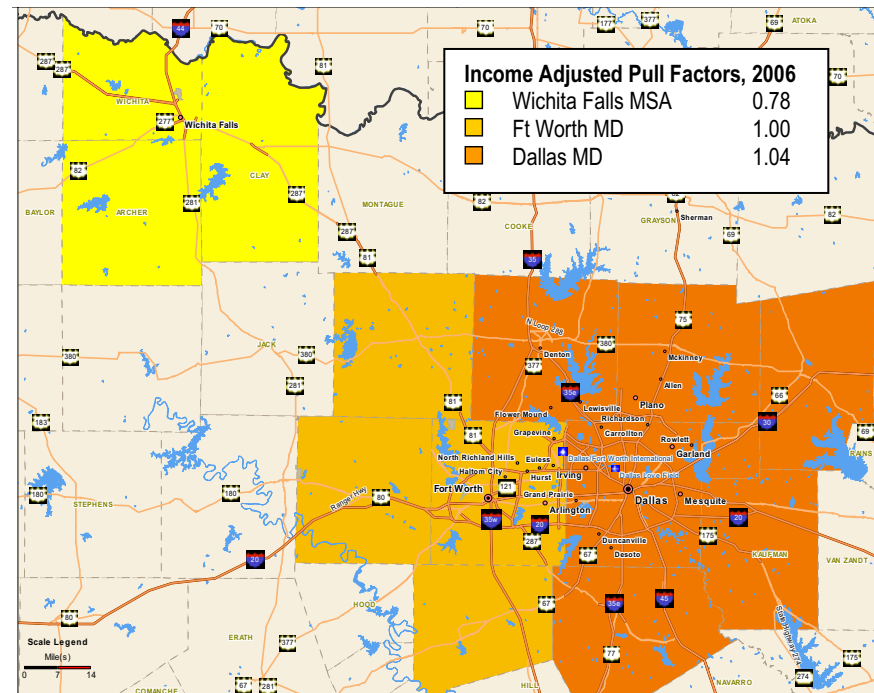
➤ **Retail sales** and outlets in Wichita Falls have been increasing over the past five years. However, significant retail leakage from Wichita Falls still occurs. To measure this retail leakage, the consulting team conducted a pull-factor analysis. A pull factor measures the degree of retail leakage in a community. A pull factor above 1.00 indicates that a community serves as a retail center for adjacent communities, while a pull factor less than 1.00 indicates that a community is losing retail sales to adjacent communities. To understand retail spending in Wichita Falls, we included the Fort Worth-Arlington and Dallas-Irving-Plano Metropolitan Divisions.

Income Adjusted Pull Factor, 2002-2006



- The Income Adjusted Pull Factor graph shows that, since 2002, the Wichita Falls MSA has generated a pull factor of less than 1.00. This implies that residents of Wichita Falls are spending a portion of their incomes outside of the Wichita Falls MSA. Moreover, the pull factor in Wichita Falls declined from 0.84 in 2002 to 0.78 in 2006. This is the result of per capita retail sales in Wichita Falls not increasing proportionally to the average per capita retail sales for Texas. This decline indicates that the retail leakage out of Wichita Falls is worsening in spite of the increase in retail outlets and sales over the same period.
- In 2007, Wichita Falls' retail sector experienced significant growth with the opening of a number of big box retailers including Bed, Bath & Beyond, Academy, and an additional Wal-Mart. This growth will likely alleviate this retail leakage.

- The Dallas Metropolitan District (MD), however, continues to capture more retail sales on a per capita basis than both Wichita Falls and the Fort Worth MD. Fort Worth has been gaining a greater share of retail sales per capita in the past two years, but still does not capture as much as Dallas.



Redefining PLACE

Much has been written about the importance of quality of life to the site selection process. Communities throughout the nation have positioned themselves by touting their advantages in this regard—good schools, safe streets, pleasant weather. We agree these factors are important. We take issue only with the narrowness of the focus. **Quality of life** assumes that everyone thrives in the same environment and is attracted to the same amenities. It assumes that current residents' view of what makes a community would be shared by all.

By contrast, **quality of place** considers what is attractive to a range of residents, both old and new. The idea of quality of place accommodates growth and recognizes the benefits of change. It recognizes that one person's "good place to raise a family" might translate into another's "there's nothing to do in this town." Quality of place is about providing options, not just for current residents, but for those who will be residents in the future.

PLACE

The consulting team's assessment of the quality of place in Wichita Falls was based largely on observations and impressions of both the consultants and the various stakeholder groups that participated in the interviews and focus groups.

- The strength of the area's school systems and the friendly nature of the community are the attributes of the city that stakeholders most often praised. Not surprisingly, MSU and SAFB are viewed as critical assets in the community.
- Most people do not currently consider downtown Wichita Falls as a desirable destination. Some perceive it to be unsafe. Most don't feel like there is anything to do in downtown aside from a few long-standing local restaurants.
 - Most residents, however, appreciate the economic and cultural potential of downtown and would like to see it develop into a more vibrant destination like Sundance Square (Fort Worth) or West End (Dallas).
- Wichita Falls does not currently offer many entertainment options for the students at MSU and trainees at SAFB. The pool of 5,000 to 11,000 students and trainees present in Wichita Falls at any given time would provide a strong base of customers for establishments geared toward offering a range of entertainment options to the young adult demographic.
 - Enhancing the experience that the students and trainees have in Wichita Falls can be an effective tool for recruiting talent. Fond memories of their stay in Wichita Falls could bring them back to the community at some point.
 - One stakeholder commented that trainees often joke that their favorite part of their stay in Wichita Falls is "leaving."
- Many stakeholders also cited the need for more amenities and recreation opportunities that cater to young professionals and young families.
- People outside of Wichita Falls tend to hold a negative or ambivalent image of the community. Internally, many people seem to have an "inferiority complex" about their city. Many stakeholders noted that both internal and external marketing and public relations efforts should be initiated to improve these views.

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) helps create a framework for understanding the area's issues and formulating appropriate vision, goals, and strategies. This assessment was based on interviews, site visits, data analysis, and our experience. The following table captures the major findings from this analysis:

SWOT Analysis

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
TALENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MSU <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – engineering – business – healthcare ➤ SAFB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 82nd Training Wing (technical & medical) – Euro NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training Program (ENJJPT) pilots and families – Retirees living in the community ➤ BCI Workforce Taskforce ➤ K-12 education ➤ Vernon College ➤ Manufacturing skills (e.g., welding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Flat population growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prospective employers might assume low workforce availability ➤ Reported difficulty in recruiting skilled professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – physicians – nurses – engineers ➤ Competing with D/FW to retain existing professionals ➤ Need for “new generation” of civic leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ MSU <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Formal role in ED – City & BCI helping to increase enrollment ➤ SAFB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improving student experience and impression of WF – ENJJPT alumni program – Veterans inventory ➤ Regional workforce development strategy ➤ Aligning target industries and training programs (K-12, Vernon) ➤ External public relations campaign ➤ Next Generation Task Force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continued flat /negative population growth ➤ Inability to retain/recruit younger talent ➤ Aging population ➤ Loss of additional training missions at SAFB ➤ Exurban expansion of Metroplex <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Emerging competitors such as Decatur – Could be long term opportunity

	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
INDUSTRY & INNOVATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Existing manufacturing base ➤ 4A & 4B tax revenues ➤ Available industrial sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – WF Business Park – Delphi Property ➤ MSU Lalani Center (entrepreneurship) ➤ Air quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Loss of manufacturing employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Delphi ➤ Non-competitive wages (regionally & nationally) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recruiting companies priced out of D/FW and larger metro areas ➤ Tie ED initiatives with MSU programs ➤ Attract new missions to SAFB ➤ Entrepreneurship ➤ Angel & mentor networks ➤ One-stop shop center & incubator ➤ Texoma region co-marketing opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Additional loss of manufacturers
PLACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Downtown building stock ➤ Higher education presence ➤ Hotter'n Hell ➤ Recent surge of new restaurants ➤ Availability of quality and affordable housing stock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Internal & external perception ➤ Under-utilized downtown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Downtown revitalization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Catalyst project(s) – Linking to SAFB & MSU – Streetscapes & beautification – Reauthorizing TIF – Other incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continuing shift of city center farther away from downtown.

About Us

This study was prepared under contract with the City of Wichita Falls, Texas, with financial support from the Office of Economic Adjustment, Department of Defense. The content reflects the views of the City of Wichita Falls and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Office of Economic Adjustment.

TIP is a privately held, Austin-based business and economic development consulting firm committed to providing quality solutions for both public and private-sector clients.

Established in 1995, the firm's areas of practice include economic development consulting, strategic planning, site selection, economic impact analysis, regional economic development, target industry analysis, cluster analysis, technology audit, transit-oriented development, workforce analysis, feasibility studies, market analysis, and redevelopment analysis and planning.

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DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN





Introduction

In July 2007, the City of Wichita Falls contracted with Freese and Nichols, Inc. to produce a Downtown Plan for its Central Business District (CBD). The plan focuses on the downtown area and suggests innovative possibilities to enhance the downtown image and create an environment that encourages investment.

The plan lists a wide variety of recommendations grouped into chapters focusing on urban design, business and residential development, transportation, and economic development. The plan is intended to be an “action plan” and is outlined with broad objectives, an explanation of reason for the objectives, and specific strategies for implementation.

Downtown Plan Process

The planning team employed a proven planning methodology which included five phases of work: Mobilization, Data Gathering, Analysis, Review and Recommendations.

Mobilization

During the Mobilization Phase, a steering committee was appointed by the Mayor to help guide the plan. The planning team met with stakeholders, City staff, and the Mayor’s Steering Committee to kick-off the downtown planning process. At that time, the schedule and public involvement process was established.

Data Gathering

During the Data Gathering Phase, the planning team compiled a large amount of data to provide essential background information. The planning team collected site data, photographs, maps, plans, reports, and surveys.

A series of public meetings and city council presentations were conducted throughout the planning process. These meetings were well attended and gave stakeholders the opportunity to present their collective vision for Downtown as well as offer a tremendous amount of input that helped shaped the final recommendations. Following are a list of the stakeholder/ council meetings held:



- August 14, 2007 - Mayor’s Steering Committee Kick-off Meeting
- September 5, 2007 - Downtown Plan Public Kick-off Meeting
- October 9, 2007 - Downtown Wichita Falls Development, Inc. Meeting
- October 10, 2007 - City Planning Commission Downtown Plan Presentation
- November 12, 2007 - Downtown Wichita Falls Public Meeting
- January 23, 2008 - City Council Workshop
- February 15, 2008
- Downtown Wichita Falls Development, Inc. Luncheon
- April 22, 2008 - Final Downtown Plan Presentation to City Council and Community



Downtown Plan public kick-off meeting at downtown library
September 5, 2007

Analysis

During the Analysis Phase, the planning team gave thorough consideration of existing conditions. Issues were summarized and potential recommendations were explored. The team received continual feedback from various stakeholders; City staff; the Mayor’s Steering Committee; and affected agencies, which brought consensus to recommendations and future improvements.

Review

During the Review Phase, the planning team drafted concepts and preliminary recommendations. These recommendations were presented to staff, City Council, and the Mayor’s Steering Committee.

Recommendations

During the Recommendation Phase, draft reports were written and presented summarizing the process, objectives, and strategies of the planning effort.

This report concludes the recommendations of a nine month planning effort adopted by the City Council to serve as a guide for future development in downtown Wichita Falls.



Background

Geographic Location and Size

Wichita Falls is located in North Central Texas and has a population of approximately 100,000. The city limits encompass 71.29 square miles and is situated midway between Oklahoma City and the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. Downtown Wichita Falls is bounded by the Wichita River on the northwest, Highway 287 on the southwest, the Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroads on the northeast, and Kell Boulevard on the southeast.

City Facts

In November 2001, Wichita Falls was named “America’s Most Average City” according to an analysis of the 2000 U.S. Census by Advertising Age. Wichita Falls was considered to be representative of the national average for ethnicity, household size, and median age. The area’s largest employer is Sheppard Air Force Base. Furthermore, Midwestern State University is located in Wichita Falls and has a student population of approximately 6,000.

Downtown Wichita Falls

Downtown Wichita Falls served as the center of the community from the city’s founding in 1882 through the oil boom until the 1970s. The advent of the Sikes Center Mall and surrounding commercial development in 1974 drew large retailers, including JC Penney and Sears, out of downtown. This change in commercial development patterns, in conjunction with a weakening of Wichita Fall’s oil sector, hastened the decline of downtown as the commercial center.

“Location, location, location.”

As the commercial draw of the mall area grew, residential development followed, moving growth in a southwesterly direction. This pattern has continued to the present. Consequently, downtown is no longer the geographic center of the city and is “out of the way” relative to the newer commercial centers around the mall. Downtown now competes with newer commercial centers for tenants and visitors.



Wichita Falls, Scott Street - 1950s
Source: Texas Postcards, TxGenWeb



Downtown Today

While downtown is not the busy center that it once was in the 1950s, it still has the largest concentration of public sector and office workers in the city. The Wichita County Administrative offices are located downtown, which attracts county-related businesses and people conducting business with the county. The City, a number of financial institutions, the Times Record News, and multiple professional services firms are housed in downtown office space. In addition, the area's oil and gas industry is still concentrated downtown. The majority of these uses draw people downtown from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on weekdays.

In addition to the uses described above, the public library, a number of arts organizations and museums, restaurants, various specialty retailers, and three new residential projects are scattered throughout downtown. These uses do draw residents and visitors downtown on nights and weekends, but downtown is not a primary destination for residents of Wichita Falls. It is still not a place residents would take visitors to showcase Wichita Falls or a place they would choose to stroll around on weekends.

Downtown Tomorrow

The potential for downtown to become a primary destination for Wichita Falls is evident. The historic buildings, walkable street grid, existing businesses and cultural amenities create a strong base for revitalization efforts.

With 6,000 students at Midwestern State University and a daily average of almost 6,000 students at Sheppard AFB, Wichita Falls has a sizeable population of young adults that would likely embrace downtown retail and entertainment options. In addition to attracting young adults, a revitalized downtown with a diverse range of entertainment, retail, residential, and employment options could draw from over 100,000 residents in Wichita Falls and over 350,000 residents in the region. The implementation of effective strategies as part of a well-coordinated revitalization effort can make a significant difference in restoring Downtown Wichita Falls as a prime destination in the region.

Existing Linkages and Gateways

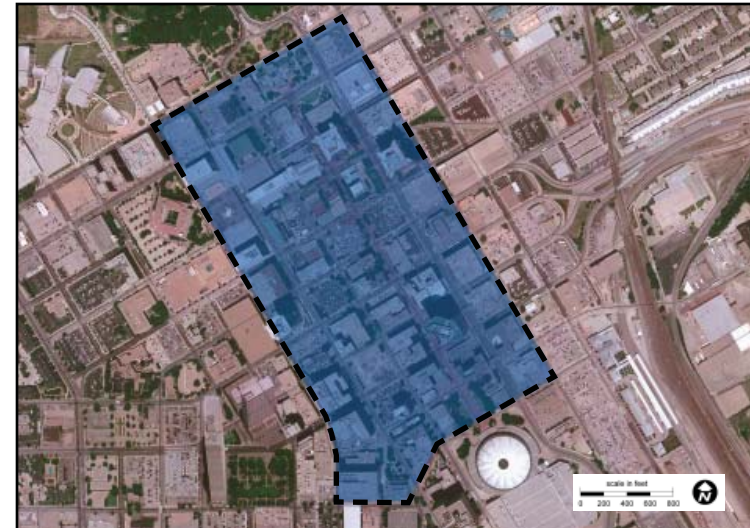




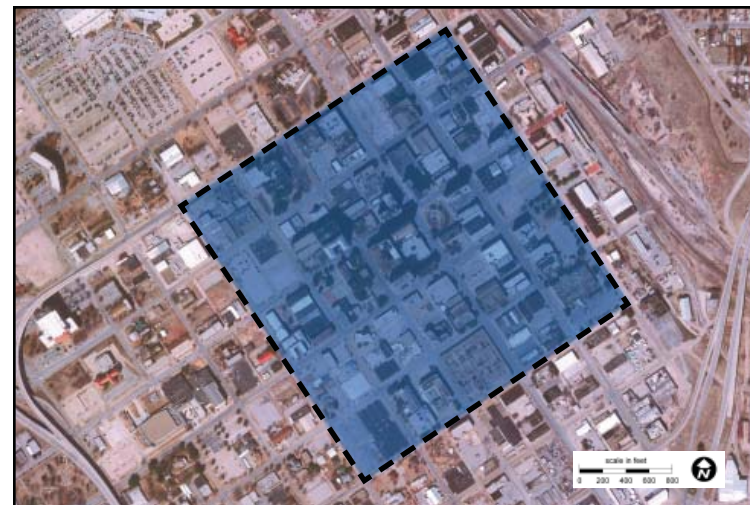
Downtown Comparisons

An example of a similar sized downtown which has overcome significant loss of urban vitality is Fort Worth. Downtown Fort Worth's early successes were attributed to good urban design strategies. Fort Worth carefully envisioned and planned specific events to bring attention to the downtown area. For instance, their first major redevelopment project began with the streetscape and tree lighting of Main Street. An arts festival soon followed as an invitation to the public to see the renaissance taking place. The creation of a public improvement district (PID) helped to provide an additional level of maintenance to streets and public rights of way, along with providing additional street furnishings and amenities. Downtown Fort Worth is now a destination and a vibrant urban area that is continuing to develop as one of the country's premier downtowns.

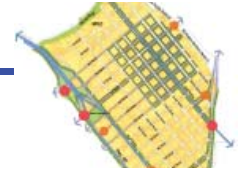
Downtown Wichita Falls' core area is very similar in size to the core area of downtown Fort Worth (see same-scaled comparisons). The two downtowns also have some other features in common as well. Both downtowns are bound by a river to the northwest and by railroads to the northeast. The core of Downtown Fort Worth, which is outlined in the graphic on the top right, is approximately 103 acres, while Downtown Wichita Falls is approximately 80 acres. Wichita Falls has a very large downtown core area considering the city's population which is approximately 100,000.



Downtown Core - Fort Worth, TX



Downtown Core - Wichita Falls, TX



Conceptual Linkage and Gateway Enhancements



The Downtown Vision

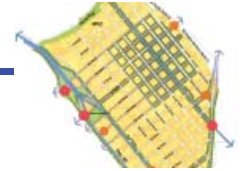
The focus of the downtown plan is to provide recommendations for redevelopment of the downtown Wichita Falls area by implementation of strategic physical and economic improvements. The goal or 'vision' of the plan is a renewed, expanded, vibrant downtown—a downtown the whole city takes pride in and wants to be a part of and one that attracts continued commercial and residential growth. Downtown Wichita Falls vision includes the following:

- Renewed, vibrant downtown
- Gateways
- Streetscapes
- Building and parking edges
- Residential development
- Urban design guidelines
- Special events
- Public spaces and art
- Urban features
- Code amendments

A successful vision for downtown must include the greater downtown area. Geographically, the greater downtown area is defined by Central Freeway (I-44/U.S. Hwy. 287) to the west, the Wichita River to the north, the railroads to the east, and Kell Boulevard to the south.

Gateways

While the current and likely future downtown 'core' lies well within these boundaries, the key entry points or gateways into downtown for most visitors occur along these outer edges. Visitors also travel through outer downtown districts and zones before arriving at centrally-located destinations. Arrival experiences shape visitors' impressions about downtown as they travel to and from the area. These experiences are critically important as they will influence visitors' attitudes about wanting to return to downtown and about supporting necessary revitalization efforts.



The experience of arriving at a destination begins with preparing to take a highway exit, cross an intersection, pass through an area, or enter a driveway. The degree to which that experience can be managed often determines whether or not the arrival experience is a pleasant one. The most successful shaping of the arrival experience begins early by reinforcing the visitor's image of their destination and by guiding the visitor to the destination. Arrival points or gateways need not be and, in the case of successful downtowns, rarely are grand monuments or gates. However, theme wayfinding signage placed along well-maintained and landscaped gateway streets is important. Smaller monuments and landscaped areas along these routes can also benefit the arrival experience. These identifying and guiding features should have a consistent design theme in all locations.

Gateway signage should begin with directional information on boundary highway and roadway signs. Additionally, preferred routes to downtown destinations should be reinforced. For example, downtown core area visitors arriving via southbound I-44/U.S. Hwy.

287 should be directed by highway signage to take the 8th Street exit and directed at the 8th Street intersection to turn left. Improvements along the north edge of Harold Jones Park and along both sides of 8th Street should recognize that pathway's function as a gateway to downtown. The same principle applies to the other gateways including northbound I-44/U.S. Hwy. 287, north and southbound Scott Avenue (Business 287), eastbound 6th Street, eastbound 10th Street, eastbound Kell Boulevard (Spur 447), northbound Broad, westbound Spur 447, and westbound 7th Street.

Locations with special opportunities for gateway enhancements include: 8th Street parkland frontage along Harold Jones Park and Kell Boulevard broad median and parkway edge between the freeway and Scott Avenue.



8th and Broad St.



Kell Blvd. and Broad St.

Streetscapes

In their most basic form, streets are corridors for vehicular movement and access to parking. In a successful and vibrant urban area, they must provide these basic functions and much more. They must provide a zone which attracts and provides comfort to pedestrians, both in daytime and nighttime. In essence, such streetscapes become like linear parks for the pedestrian, attracting them to spend time there and return in the future. The 'streetscape' includes all of the physical elements from one edge of the street-right-of-way to the other. Examples of these elements are street pavement (travel lanes and on-street parking spaces), curbs and gutters, surface drainage inlets, sidewalks, planting areas (for trees, shrubs, groundcover, flowers, or grasses), pots or raised planters, cross walks, ramps, roadway light poles and fixtures, pedestrian light poles and fixtures, signs, pole-mounted banners, benches, trash receptacles, bollards, tree grates, parking meters, utility boxes, above-ground utility lines, and specialty items such as water features or public art.

Well placed street trees provide a shade canopy from sunlight and its glare from building windows. They also provide a buffer between pedestrians and vehicles, offering an enclosure or comfort zone for those walking along commercial office and retail storefronts or areas with outdoor dining. Parallel and angled on-street parking further extends the buffer between pedestrians and traffic and provides additional parking spaces with close proximity to destinations.

Streetscape elements used in the downtown area should be a consistent type or design. One possible exception to this is providing variation in some streetscape elements from



Downtown streets banners



one downtown district to another. For example, the Depot Square Historic Zone and the Northwest Convention District (described later in this section) might utilize different models of light poles and fixtures whose color and style are compatible. However, care should be exercised in determining such allowed differences. Consistency of design theme throughout the entire downtown area may appropriately outweigh desire for design differences between districts.

Downtown streetscapes should include modification of existing curb and gutter locations to provide bulb-outs at intersections. Bulb-outs (shifting curbs out to edge of travel lanes where no parking is allowed) provide protection and enhancement of pedestrian spaces at intersections and alleys. Additionally, they provide for a significantly reduced crosswalk distance resulting in a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

Pole-mounted banners should be incorporated on key downtown streets to provide a festive atmosphere and communicate upcoming special events.

Unightly streetscape elements such as overhead utility lines, especially along gateway streets, should be removed.

Building and Parking Edges

Preservation of building edges at the street's edge creates the 'urban fabric' of downtown areas. When this pattern is interrupted, there is a noticeable loss of continuity. Unless the interruption is intentional for special effect, such as an urban park or plaza, the continuity should be maintained. Buildings should face the street with their face at the street right-of-way edge. Parking lots abutting the street right-of-way edge should generally be discouraged. When they do occur in this location, a continuity of building edge should be provided in the form of a decorative fence and/or line of shrubs.

Building uses at ground level should be those that promote daytime and nighttime as well as weekday and weekend activities at street level. Examples of these include commercial shopping, dining, entertainment, other retail/customer services, and residential entries.

Districts

Within an area the size of greater downtown Wichita Falls, it is helpful to identify zones or districts which have a unifying feature such as historic identity, sense of place, consistent

Proposed Downtown Districts





land use, association with a particular destination, etc. The recognition of a series of smaller planning areas or zones is helpful in formulating thoughts about land use preferences, urban design criteria, and redevelopment objectives. Recognition of such zones also helps keep redevelopment activities going by encouraging community involvement through a distinctive sense of neighborhood and a common purpose for each district or zone.

The districts within Downtown Wichita Falls include the following:

- The Central Office / Retail / Entertainment Core
- The Depot Square Historic Zone
- The Westside Institutional District
- The Northeast Commercial / Industrial Zone
- The Northwest Convention District
- The Southeast Commercial / Industrial Zone
- The Westside Commercial District
- The Southwest Neighborhood District
- The Wichita River Greenbelt

Linkages between downtown districts and adjoining districts should be encouraged and maintained.

Residential Development

Downtown residents are very important to the success of urban redevelopment. In addition to providing economic support for retail and entertainment businesses, they provide 'life' to downtown when visitors are not present. The 'live/work/play' theme and goal present in today's successful urban environments is dependent upon the presence of downtown residents. A significant increase in downtown core area residential development



Downtown Residential - City of Hayward, CA
Population 140,600

should be encouraged. Downtown residential development should attract individuals and families from a range of income levels. In addition, to encourage residential development in the 'core,' revitalization of the Southwest Neighborhood District can and should play an important role in the revitalization of the greater downtown area.

Urban Design Guidelines

Guidelines and standards related to all aspects of physical development within the downtown area should be conceived and implemented to insure cohesive design and a consistent level of quality of the built environment. These guidelines should provide standards for streets, sidewalks, parking, building facades, roadway and pedestrian lighting, building exterior lighting, signs and banners, utilities, landscaping, building canopies, historic preservation, and public art.

Special Events

Special recurring or one-time events held on public streets or in public plazas downtown should be encouraged. A year-round calendar of events including art festivals, music events, parades, cook-offs, auto/motorcycle displays should be developed and promoted to encourage participation by city residents and out-of-town visitors. Wichita Falls is already host to several events including the Hotter-'n Hell Hundred. Associated events and the cycling ride route should be designed to encourage maximum exposure to downtown.

Temporary street closures should occur where appropriate for size of event and need for increased pedestrian space and protection. An example of this is a temporary closing of a few blocks of 8th Street for an outdoor art/music festival with artist and food vendor tents at mid-block locations and live music stages at intersection locations.



Hotter'n Hell - Wichita Falls, TX



Enhancement of Public Space with Water Features and Public Art

Existing parks should be upgraded providing features consistent with those of successful urban parks. Full utilization of the parks should be promoted. The most successful downtown parks provide for a variety of uses including special events such as weekend and evening concerts, lunch outings for area employees, respites for tourist pedestrians, and outdoor space for apartment dwellers.



Plaza Fountain - Dallas, TX

A significant water feature and public art should be incorporated in these spaces to enhance the multiple users' experience and encourage repeated visits. Public art may also be promoted in streetscape locations where space and art size allow and such special location is desired.



Downtown public art - Grapevine, TX



Interactive water feature

Special Urban Enhancements

Special features unique to the Wichita Falls downtown area should be enhanced to promote a festive downtown image and increase the downtown 'sense of place'. Two examples of this are special color-changing uplighting of the attractive support columns under the Central Freeway (I-44/U.S. Hwy. 287) and enhanced exterior lighting of the taller downtown

buildings. Additionally, lighting of street trees, particularly along key streets, would further promote evening activities.

Code Enforcement

The zoning, application, and building code process must address the unique complications that exist with developing higher density urban residential and mixed-uses for both adaptive re-use and new projects. Often jurisdictions have adopted specific state amendments to the standard building



Broad and 11th St.
Ideal location for freeway uplighting

code to allow substitutions for rehabilitation of older structures and urban, non-conventional projects. This should not mean jeopardizing the health, safety, or welfare of potential tenants. It is apparent that redevelopment of downtown buildings, particularly historic buildings, are challenging. It is recommended Wichita Falls adopt amendments intended to facilitate the application of building code requirements to older structures and develop a task force specifically charged with finding creative ways to support, encourage, and reward urban solutions in the downtown environment.



Example of older structures in downtown Wichita Falls that have potential for redevelopment





URBAN DESIGN



Urban Design

Urban Design involves the arrangement of buildings, streets, sidewalks, landscaping, and outdoor spaces that make up towns and cities and the way people use them. Implementation of good urban design can sometimes cost more up-front, but it also offers significant benefits to the community. Urban areas which implement sound urban design principles encourage sustained economic vitality, deliver improved quality of life, and are highly valued by the community.

Wichita Falls has a great opportunity to strengthen the urban fabric that defines the heart of the City. Currently, downtown has lost some of its appeal as a destination area. While there is an active group of stakeholders investing in downtown, it is incumbent upon the City and this planning effort to suggest ways to create a vibrant center and destination place for the greater community to enjoy.

Through the enhancement of existing pedestrian linkages, open spaces, streetscapes, landscaping, and gateway features, Wichita Falls can achieve a more inviting, attractive, and walkable downtown. A walkable downtown makes pedestrian mobility easier and more enjoyable, and it helps to attract foot-traffic needed to sustain downtown retail and restaurant establishments.

Open space provides areas for people to enjoy the outdoor environment in urban settings, but they also provide areas for public gatherings and events. Open spaces provide a breath of fresh air in a “hustle and bustle” society and become necessary in attracting residential developments, especially in urban areas.

The purpose of districts is to identify areas that are unique and possibly suited for special types of development and conservation. Districts also allow for the location of similar developments, businesses, activities, and services to exist within close proximity. This creates opportunities for pedestrian linkages that enhance a downtown’s urban environment. Design standards in certain districts will give that particular area a unique look and feel while still maintaining consistency with the general downtown area.

The following are urban design related recommendations. Detailed strategies for each objective are outlined in the following chapter.

Summary of Urban Design Objectives

- **Integrate new and innovative features into the existing downtown park in order to maximize its appeal and utilization.**
This park serves at the “focal point” for downtown and should be redesigned to serve as a focal point for public and private events.
- **Promote walkability and an overall pedestrian-friendly environment on designated city streets through streetscape enhancement.** Particularly, Scott St. and 8th St. should be a priority to serve as the two “main streets”.
- **Organize the museum experience.** Explore the creation of a cycling museum.
- **Improve the downtown experience through the enhancement of gateways and linkages.**
- **Ensure a cohesive and integrated redevelopment of downtown through the recognition of distinct districts.**
- **Improve visual and physical connections between downtown and the Wichita River corridor.** Create open space/pocket parks to serve residential developments.
- **Increase the presence of public art throughout the downtown area.**



Objective 1: Integrate new and innovative features into the existing downtown park in order to maximize its appeal and utilization.

Explanation:

Downtown parks are great amenities for employees working downtown, residents of the area, and visitors. Parks in general provide spaces for relaxation, leisure and physical activities. Because of the urban environment and hardscape of most downtown areas, parks become necessary to provide areas where people can enjoy nature in the midst of built environments. Downtown parks are also assets to developers in search of urban areas in which to place their developments.

It is important for parks to be aesthetically and functionally attractive in order for them to be used frequently by the public.



The Grove at Southpark Meadows - Austin, TX
Interactive Fountain

On the southeast corner of 8th Street and Scott Avenue, the City of Wichita Falls owns a park that is approximately 0.62 acres. Although this is considered a small park, its central location makes it very valuable to downtown.

The existing park is suburban in character, consisting of a centrally-located circular seating area, bisecting sidewalks, and extensive landscaping. Seating is provided by modular picnic tables with built-in seating. Light-weight structures provide overhead shade. The seating area is surrounded by dense planting of tall grasses and low-branched trees placed on berms. This arrangement greatly limits visibility of the seating area and park interior for pedestrians and vehicles along the two fronting streets, 8th Street and Scott Avenue. Open space in the park is divided into numerous small patches varying in shape. Vagrants are commonly seen in the seating area. The park is perceived to be uninviting and potentially

unsafe. Consequently, the park is greatly underutilized, both on a day-to-day basis and for special events.

Strategies:

- Redevelop the park with an urban character and a central plaza theme. The new design should provide good visibility through the park from the fronting streets, preserve the streetscape 'edges' of the fronting streets, provide open space for downtown residents and special event gatherings, incorporate a mix of softscape (planted) and hardscape (paved) areas, and provide seating oriented toward different areas of the park and the fronting streets. A conceptual design which includes all of these features is shown in plan and elevation views on the following page.
- Add interest to the park through the use of water features and public art. Water features can be designed to be passive, interactive, or to a degree both. Incorporation of one or more of these features in the park could become a downtown destination in and of itself, benefiting other downtown businesses and activities. The conceptual design shown above suggests locations for a combined fountain/sculpture feature and for an interactive water feature (splash pad).
- Encourage awareness of the park as the downtown central gathering place and promote special event use.



Park in Downtown Wichita Falls



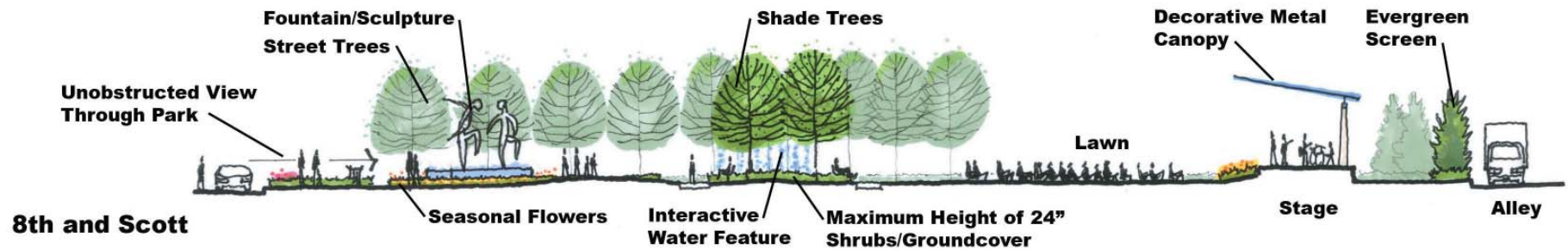
View from Alley of Downtown Park



Conceptual Redesign of Downtown Park
Plan View - Scott Ave. and 8th St.



Existing view of Downtown Park
Scott Ave. and 8th St.



Conceptual Redesign of Downtown Park
Elevation/Section - Scott Ave. and 8th St.



Objective 2: Promote walkability and an overall pedestrian friendly environment on designated city streets through streetscape enhancement.

Explanation:

Successful downtowns have several characteristics in common and one of those characteristics is a pedestrian-friendly environment. Wichita Falls has an opportunity to make its downtown a more pedestrian-friendly environment through streetscape enhancements. The built environment can be improved in a way that is pleasurable for pedestrians and attractive for developers.

The existing downtown streetscapes are not very inviting for pedestrians, particularly from a strolling standpoint. Intersection crossings are long and not particularly well-identified. Various street trees are present in several locations with inconsistent spacing and in many cases overgrown condition. Pedestrian lights, signs, benches and trash receptacles are not provided.

Strategies:

- Modify existing intersection and alley corners of streets with on-street parking to add 'bulb-outs' (shifting curbs out to the edge of travel lane) to define pedestrian vs. vehicular zones and shorten cross-walk distances. The bulb-outs should include ramps which provide an accessible path between sidewalks and crosswalks and which meet current accessibility criteria. Additionally, the bulb-outs may include special pedestrian paving, irrigated landscaping, and enhanced signal/sign/light poles. Intersection and alley corners within the downtown area should be ranked in importance for the timing of these improvements at key locations. An aerial perspective view of a conceptual design of this treatment for the 8th Street and Scott Avenue intersection is shown on the following page.

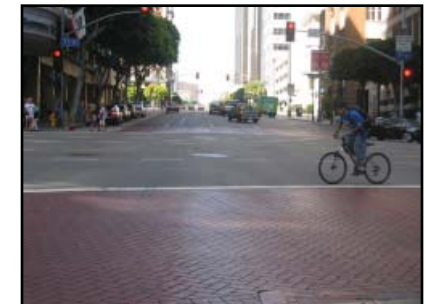


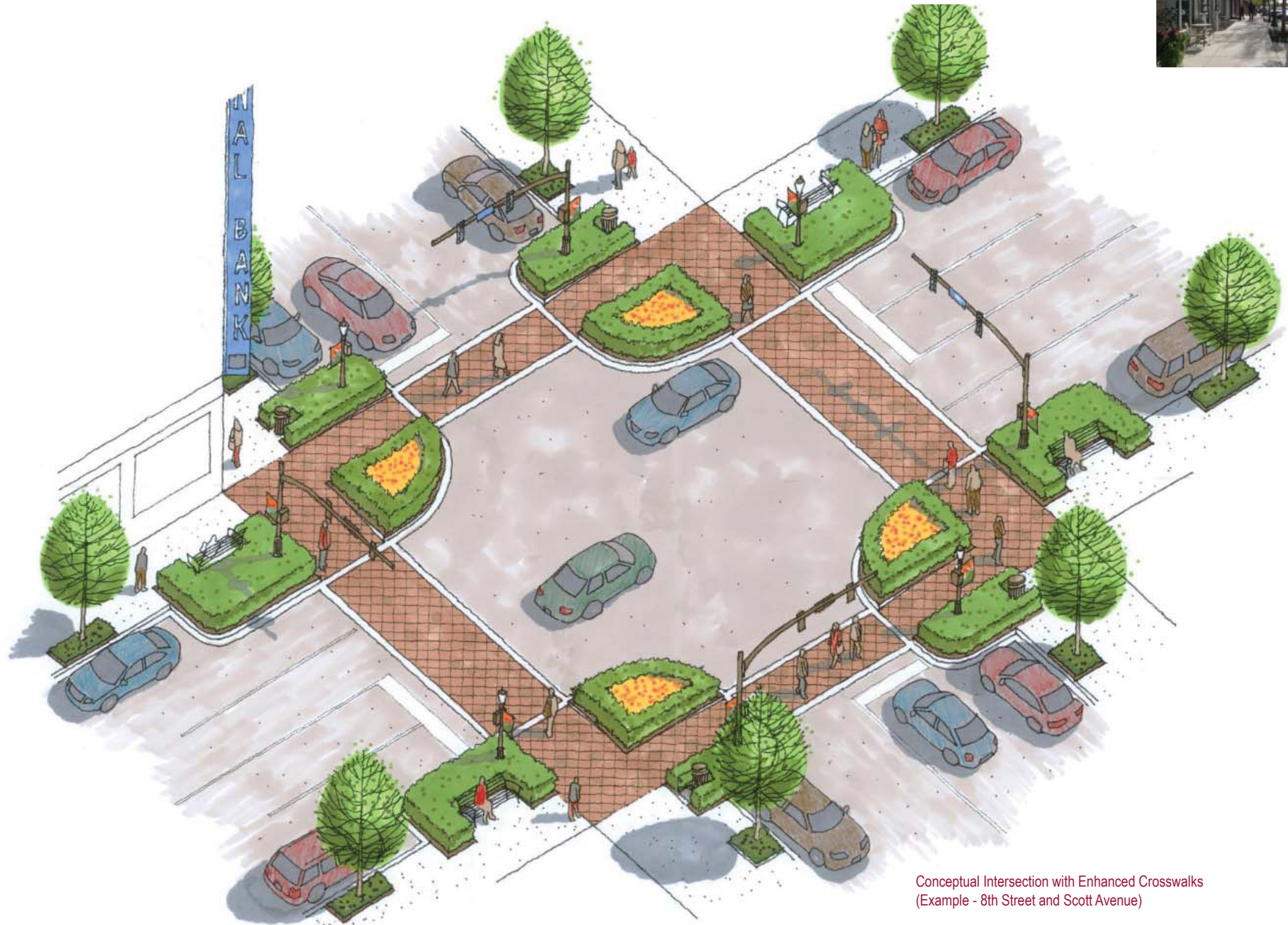
Streetscape: street trees and sidewalk elements

- Redevelop existing streetscapes (area from one edge of the street right-of-way to the other) to provide regularly-spaced street trees and landscaping, pedestrian lighting, benches, trash receptacles, and pole-mounted banners. Streetscapes within the downtown area should be ranked in importance for the timing of these improvements at key locations. Conceptual streetscape designs are outlined in the following pages both in plan and elevation views for 8th Street (typical east-west two lane), Scott Avenue (north-south four lane), and Indiana Avenue (typical north-south two lane).
- Enhance pedestrian crosswalk paving with color and texture. This enhancement provides traffic calming, is more inviting to pedestrians, and helps drivers better understand the pedestrian zone of the street. Crosswalk enhancement can be accomplished by use of a variety of methods such as brick pavers, color-stained saw-cut concrete, or stamped color-coated asphalt. The method used should be consistent at all selected downtown locations, if possible. If different methods are used, as much consistency as possible should be maintained.
- Unsightly streetscape elements such as overhead utility lines should be placed underground or removed.

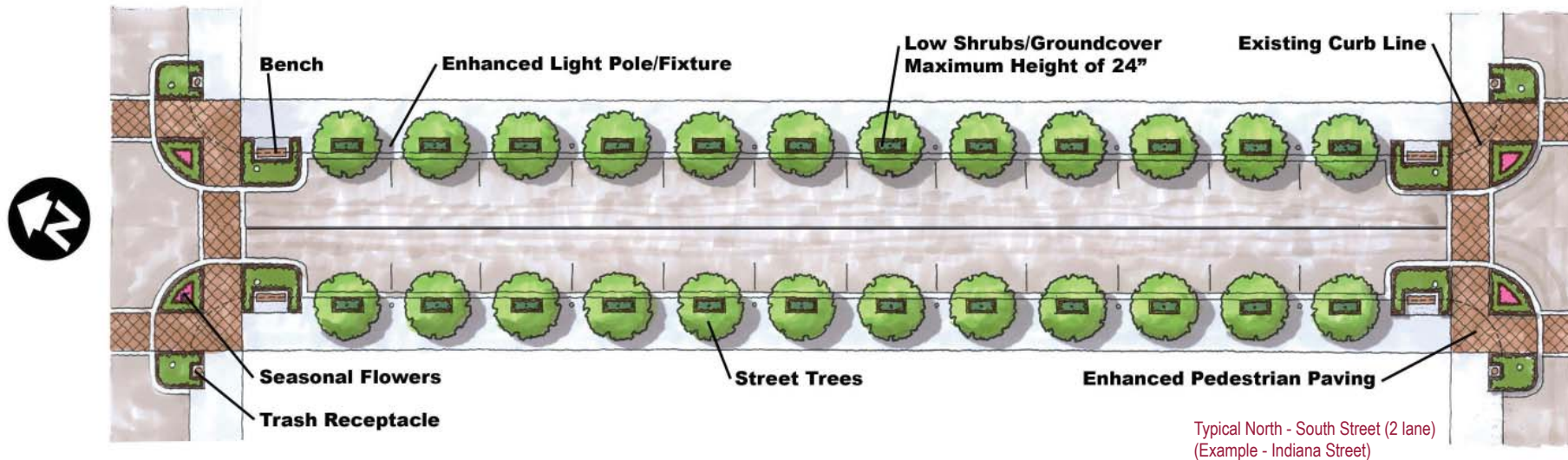
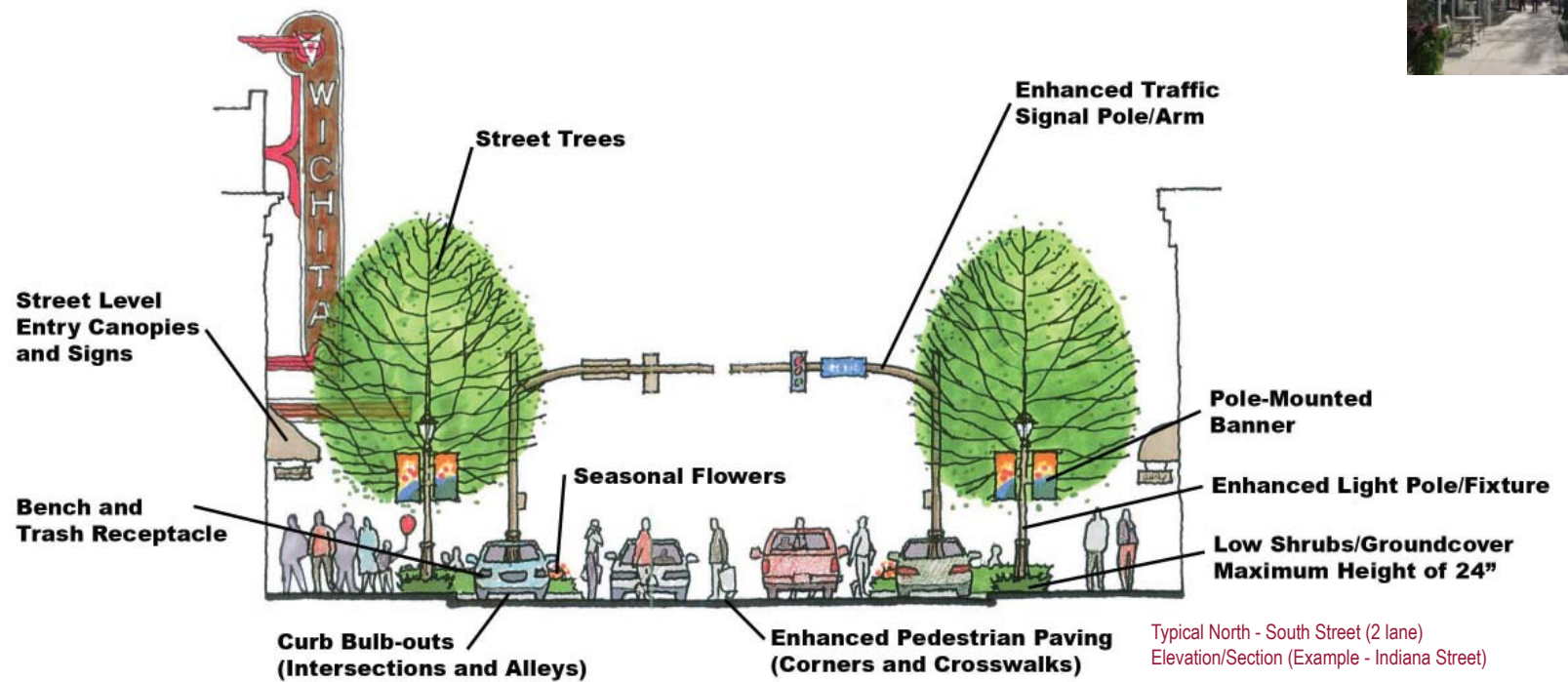


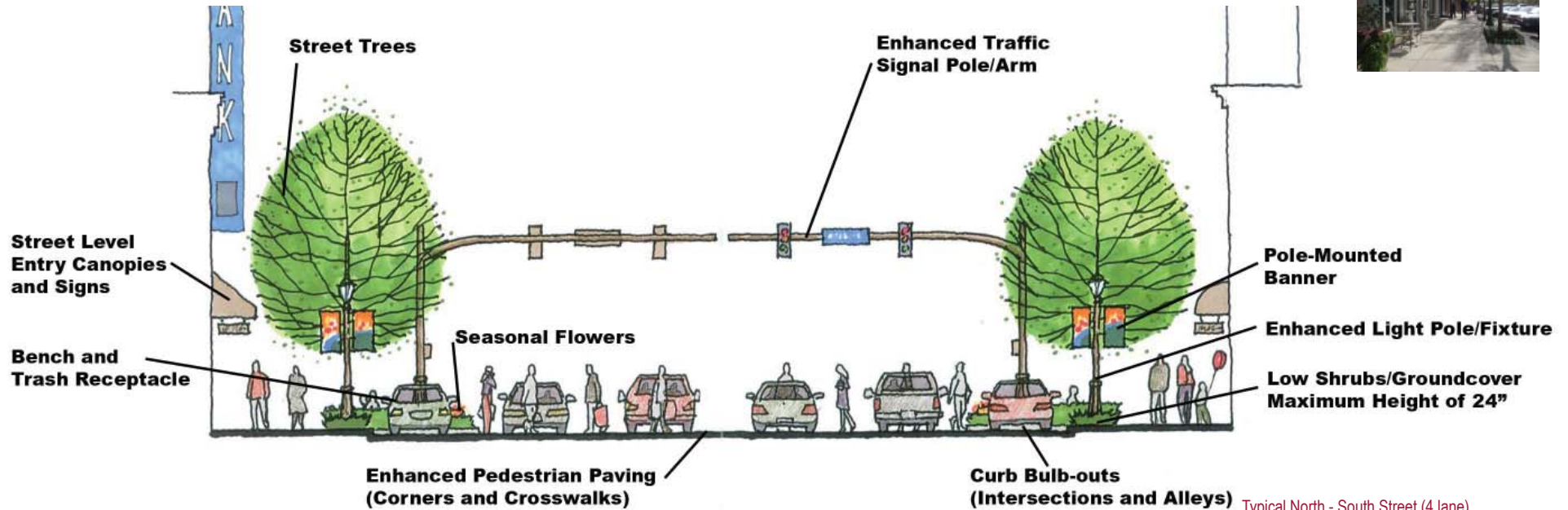
Enhanced crosswalks



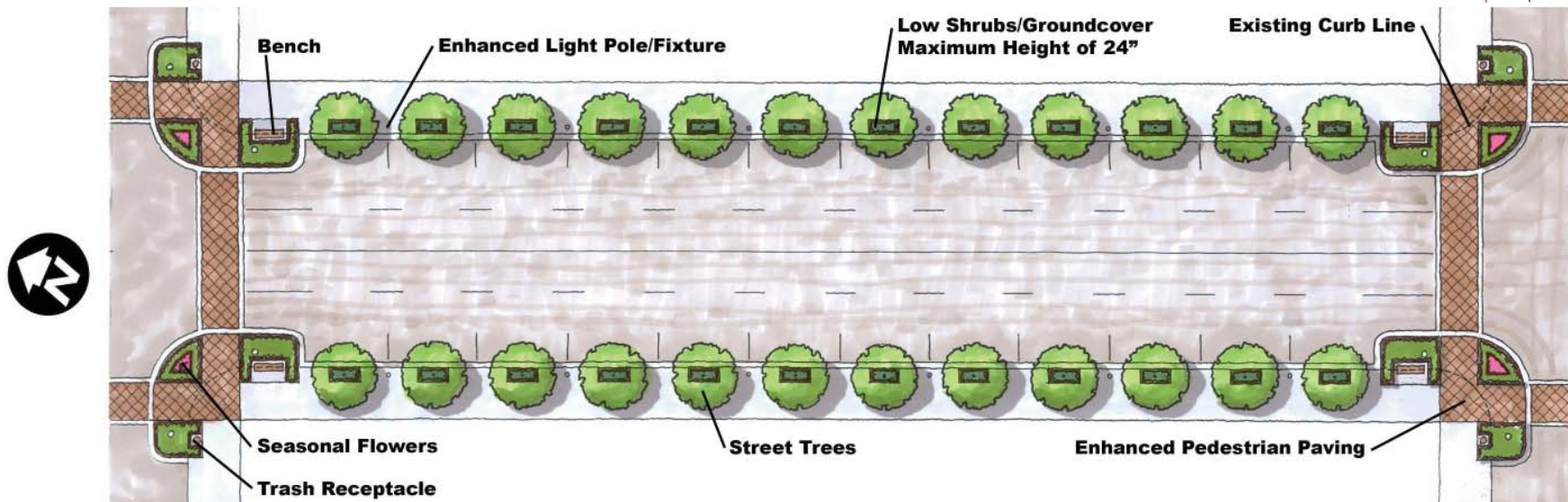


Conceptual Intersection with Enhanced Crosswalks
(Example - 8th Street and Scott Avenue)

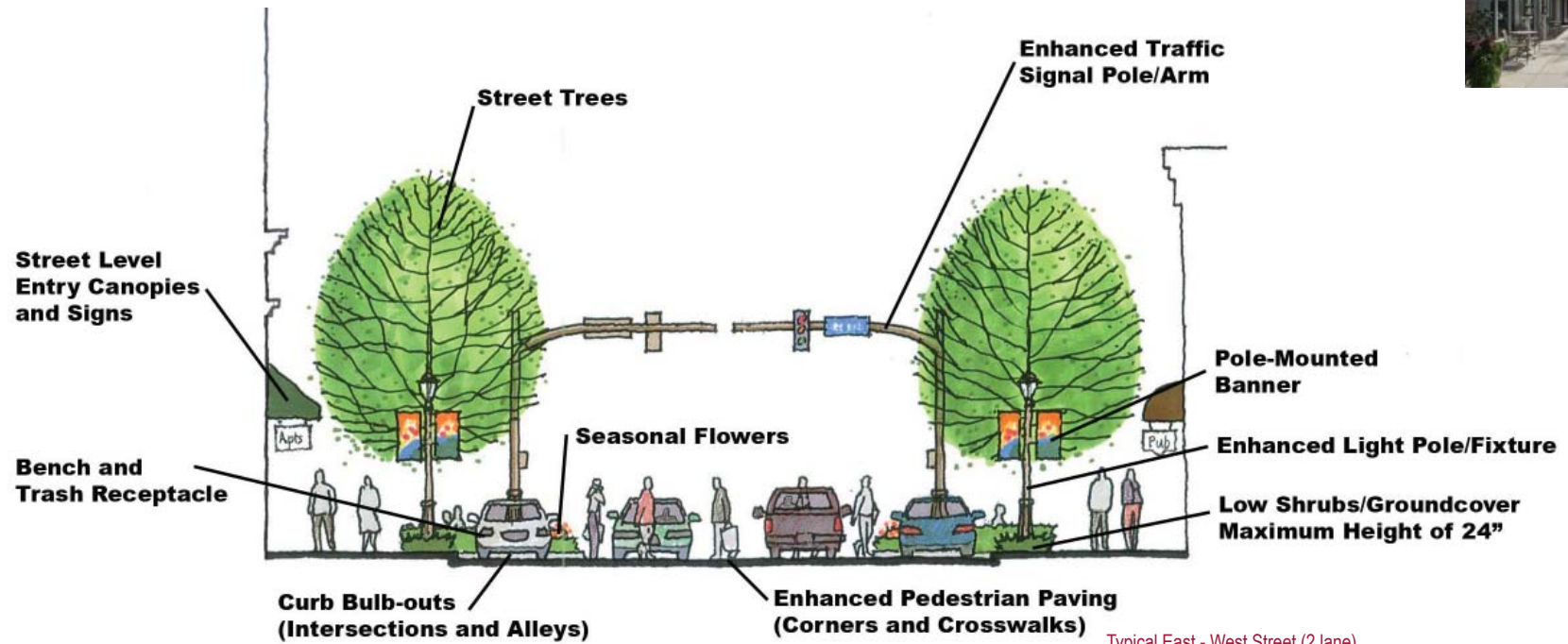




Typical North - South Street (4 lane)
Elevation/Section (Example - Scott Avenue)



Typical North - South Street (4 lane)
(Example - Scott Avenue)



Typical East - West Street (2 lane)
Elevation/Section (Example - 8th Street)



Typical East - West Street (2 lane)
(Example - 8th Street)



Objective 3: Organize the museum experience.

Explanation:

Many cities locate their museums in one geographic area making it easier for visitors and tourists to move through each museum without much walking. Museums find the number of visitors will increase when located in a museum district. Fort Worth's well known museum district has five museums located within a mile of each other. Visitors are most likely to visit at least two or three of the Fort Worth museums in one day.

Wichita Falls currently has four museums operating in downtown, but are located in various areas. These include the Kell House Museum located at 900 Bluff St., the Kemp Center for the Arts located at 1300 Lamar St., the Museum of North Texas History located at 720 Indiana Ave., and the Wichita Falls Railroad Museum located at 500 9th St.

Strategies:

- Coordinate marketing and operational efforts to maximize functionality and usage of the existing museums.
 - Build a website that features and gives information on all of the museums in the district.
- Establish a walking tour of museums which are located within a reasonable walking distance of each other.
- Explore the creation of a cycling museum that would celebrate the history and sport of cycling.
 - The "Hotter-'n Hell" cycling event brings thousands to the city every year and cycling could become one of the brands of the city with this type of museum. Locate the cycling museum in the museum district that will be established.



Museum of North Texas History



Wichita Falls Railroad Museum





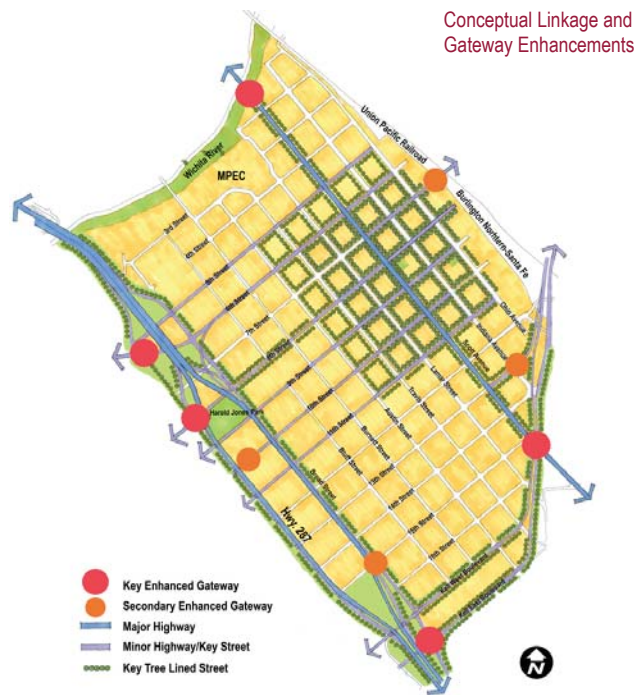
Objective 4: Improve the downtown experience through the enhancement of gateways and linkages.

Explanation:

The arrival experiences of visitors influence their attitude regarding future return visits to Downtown and their support of initiatives to revitalize the area. These experiences are shaped at the gateway arrival points and along the linkage routes as visitors approach the downtown area. Enhancement of the gateways and linkages helps visitors to have a positive experience and a desire to visit again. Gateway and linkage enhancements typically include theme wayfinding signage, landscape planting, and monuments. Enhancements may also include special effects such as public art, water features, and decorative lighting of buildings, bridges, and trees. The conceptual plan shown below highlights suggested locations of gateway and linkage enhancements.

Strategies:

- Identify and prioritize downtown gateway locations and linkage routes.
- Prepare theme designs for gateway and linkage enhancements.
- Determine enhancements to be implemented for each gateway location and linkage route.



Objective 5: Ensure a cohesive and integrated redevelopment of downtown through the recognition of distinct districts.

Explanation:

The establishment of districts within a large area is helpful in revitalization planning and implementation. The greater downtown Wichita Falls area measures over a square mile in area. Establishment of districts will be helpful in establishing revitalization objectives and determining redevelopment criteria. Districts also encourage community involvement which keep redevelopment activities in motion. Design guidelines can be implemented within districts to create identity and a common purpose for each district or zone. The map shown at the right indicates suggested districts for Downtown Wichita Falls.

Strategies:

- Establish districts or zones for the greater downtown area and determine boundaries for each district and zone.
- Identify and encourage stakeholders and property owners within each zone to form planning committees that will help guide redevelopment activities in that zone.



Proposed Downtown Districts



Objective 6: Improve visual and physical connections between Downtown and the Wichita River corridor.

Explanation:

The Wichita River, located five blocks north of 6th Street, is hidden from the Downtown core area. It isn't until you walk the trail system that you realize the river is a beautiful, existing amenity. There must be a visual and physical connection between Downtown and the Wichita River. There is great potential for future development along the river segment near Downtown. Development should not start here, but with a connection to Downtown, development will eventually make its way toward the Wichita River.

Strategies:

- 'Connect' downtown to the river through the use of signage. Create wayfinding signs to guide pedestrians from the downtown core to the river.
- Enhance vehicular and pedestrian linkages between downtown and the river, trail head areas and all connecting streets.



Wichita River and Trails behind MPEC

Objective 7: Increase the presence of public art throughout the Downtown area.

Explanation:

The objective has several purposes: beautify the community; celebrate the City's cultural and ethnic diversity; promote the work of local, regional, and national artists; and boost visitors and tourism. Public art can create distinctive and interactive urban places that might otherwise be just another pedestrian corridor. Wichita Falls has a rich history which could be illustrated through public art in downtown.

Public art can take on many forms and varied dimensions. Ideally, public art is incorporated into the overall design process of projects. Public art does not always consist of objects in the landscape. It can be incorporated into the design of pedestrian spaces, furniture, light displays, wall designs, interactive games and art, and many others.



Public art - Escondido, CA

Strategies:

- Coordinate and promote public art initiatives.
 - Coordinate with Leadership Wichita Falls to incorporate the "painted horses" project in selected Downtown areas. Leadership Wichita Falls is organizing a fundraiser where individuals or companies can purchase replica horses that are painted by local and national artists. The city should coordinate with Leadership Wichita Falls to select areas of downtown where the "painted horses" are appropriate.
- Encourage private developments to incorporate public art into private projects. Public art can greatly increase the distinction and marketability of private developments.
- Work with building and parking garage owners where appropriate, to address potential use of murals or three-dimensional artwork that could be attached to garage facades.
- Utilize public art at gateway/key arrival points and along key routes into downtown.



Public art - Grapevine, TX



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BUSINESS &
RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT



Business and Residential Development

One of the cornerstones of a thriving downtown lies in the success of its businesses and recruitment of new development. Wichita Falls must foster and direct new developments within the downtown area and specifically within the “core” as defined in earlier sections of this report.

Business development involves not only business-related objectives, but also retail and residential goals and the tools that help make projects happen. Tools such as marketing, incentive plans, public/ private partnerships, and funding strategies all encourage economic growth. Through redevelopment of existing structures and implementation of new development, Downtown Wichita Falls shouldn't be a place to visit occasionally, but it should become a destination. The ultimate goal of Downtown Wichita Falls is to become the center of the community's government, commercial, and cultural activities with ample demand of office, commercial, and residential uses.

One of the major goals of this plan is to encourage new residential units in the core of downtown. As it exists today, Downtown Wichita Falls is not a 24-hour destination. It primarily supports the 8AM-5PM business community. Successful and sustainable urban areas are those that bring people to live, work, play, and learn. Additionally, building codes and development procedures must be able to accommodate/redevelopment of older structures and facilitate residential rehabilitation.



Antique store in downtown

The following are business development related recommendations. Detailed strategies for each objective are outlined in the following chapter.

Summary of Business and Residential Development Objectives

- Consider constructing a new City Hall/Municipal Complex facility in the downtown core area.
- Implement code amendments and a development process that encourages and facilitates new development and redevelopment of downtown buildings.
- Attract new residential units in downtown. Encourage a mix of uses including redevelopment of older buildings, new developments, and renovation of surrounding housing stock.
- Develop a retail strategy that emphasizes “destination” retail. Highlight the unique amenities of retail, entertainment, residential, and cultural amenities.
- Develop a comprehensive strategy for building a Convention Center Hotel and upgrade existing hotel stock within the walkable core area.



Objective 1: Consider constructing a new City Hall/Municipal Complex facility in the downtown core area.

Explanation:

A City Hall building is the physical symbol of City government. It's the headquarters of a city or town's administration and usually houses the city or town council, its associated departments, and their employees. City Hall is where the business and decisions of the city take place.



Construction of new City Hall in Redmond, WA
Redmond has a population of 48,739

The current City Hall building was originally built as a theater and is still being used as one. Because the building in which City Hall is housed wasn't designed to function as City offices, over time it has become dysfunctional and inefficient for City operations. As City employees have grown over the years, City Hall has outgrown its current space and does not lend itself to expansion. The limited space and configuration affects the day-to-day operations.

If the City of Wichita Falls wants to continue to operate the city government effectively, then the existing City Hall building must be evaluated.

Strategies:

- Construct a new City Hall building to replace the existing building that has become dysfunctional and inefficient for current and future City operations. A new City Hall that can house all of the City's staff now and in the future will create a greater sense of identity and accessibility for employees and citizens.
- The City of Wichita Falls is in the process of conducting site studies on several locations that would be desirable for a new City Hall. One of the locations considered is outside of the central core of downtown. Another site is within the expanded downtown area, but outside the core area. The third site is the Patterson Auto location which is located near the intersection of 8th Street and Travis Street. This master plan recommends that the new City Hall be placed on this site or within the downtown core. There are several reasons why the downtown site is highly recommended:
 - The Downtown Master plan addresses what is called the "core area". This is an area of Downtown Wichita Falls that has the most activity and potential for a critical mass of activity. It is recommended that investment first be made in the in the core in order to spark economic growth and increase pedestrian activity both night and day. Currently, City Hall is located several blocks away from the core area and it doesn't allow for pedestrian connections to the core area. The Patterson Auto site is located within what is defined as the "core area" and building within this zone would increase pedestrian activity and contribute to the vitality within walkable core area.
 - A majority of governmental entities are located in downtown. The County building is located across the street from the Patterson Auto site and the courthouse is just a couple of blocks away. Creating a municipal complex near this area helps round out a governmental district and helps bring the critical city and county functions together within a walkable area.
 - This location also creates a view corridor and gateway into the center of downtown and to the MPEC. It would also be an ideal area for a new park and civic plaza.
- It is also recommended that a future transfer center be located in downtown, particularly



near the MPEC and potential municipal complex site. This would create a synergy of people and activity in this important node of downtown.

- It will take investment from both the public and private sector in order for downtown to be revitalized. A new City Hall will not only solve the physical limitations that exist in the current building, but it would show that the City itself is willing to make an investment in downtown's revitalization. This can serve as a catalyst project to leverage additional investment back into downtown.

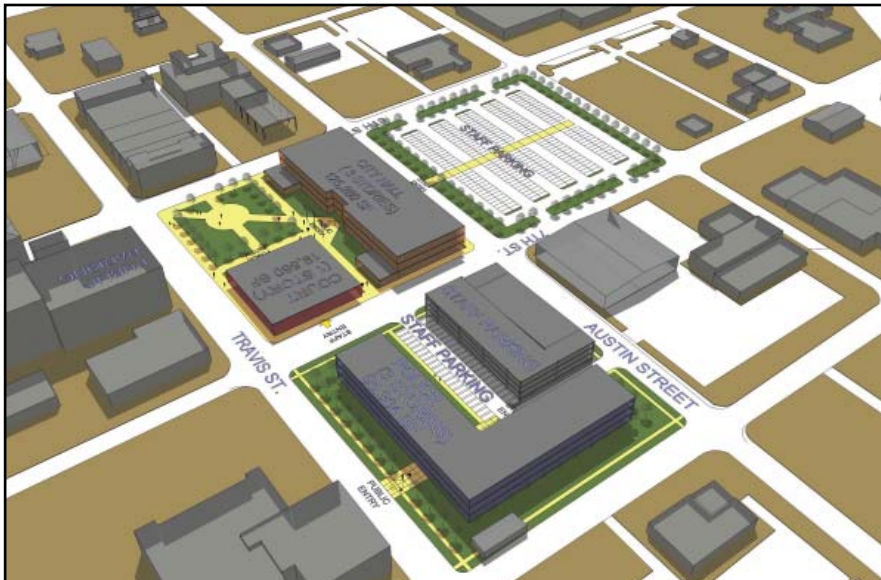


Image Courtesy of PSA-Dewberry Architects

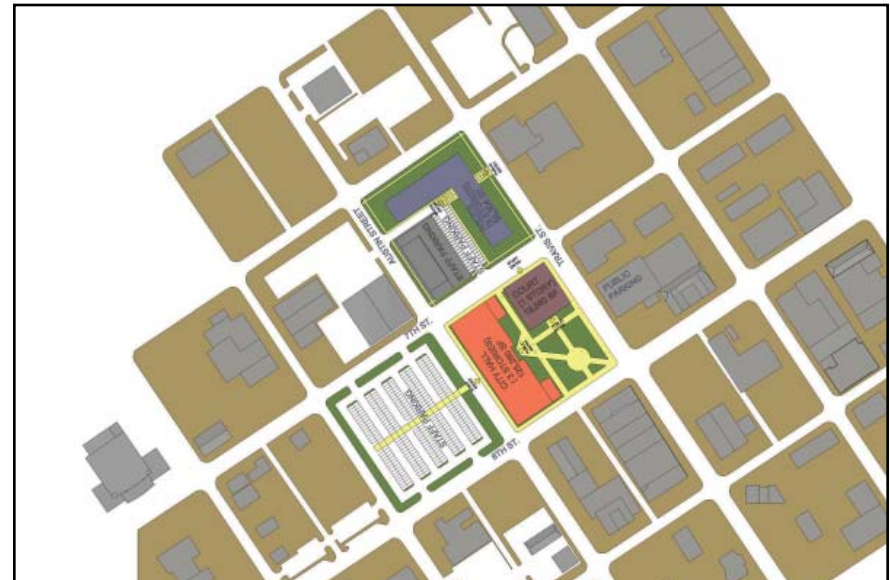
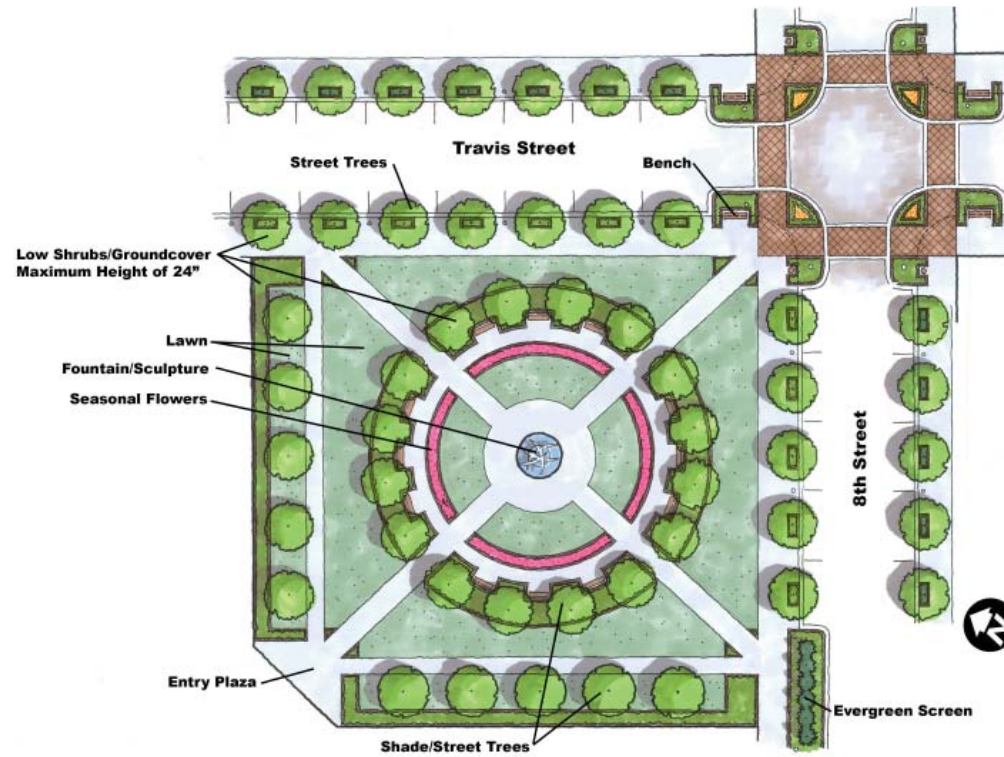
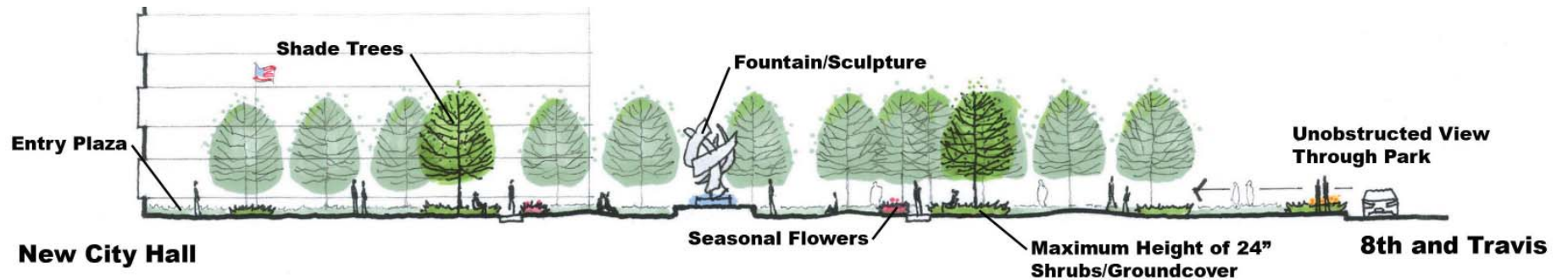


Image Courtesy of PSA-Dewberry Architects



Conceptual City Hall Plaza and Downtown Gateway





Objective 2: Implement code amendments and a development process that encourages and facilitates new development and redevelopment of downtown buildings.

Explanation:

Some jurisdictions have enacted requirements to bring certain types or uses of existing buildings into compliance with new requirements, such as the installation of smoke alarms in households or dwelling units, at the time of sale. Some safety advocates have suggested a similar approach to encourage remedial application of other requirements, but few jurisdictions have found it economical or equitable to discourage property transactions in this way.

Many jurisdictions have found the application of new requirements to old, particularly historic buildings, challenging. New Jersey, for example, has adopted specific state amendments (visit <http://www.state.nj.us/dca/codes/rehab/>) intended to facilitate the application of building code requirements to historic structures. California has also enacted a specific historic building code (visit <http://www.dsa.dgs.ca.gov/SHBSB/2001chbc.htm>). Other states require compliance with building and fire codes, subject to reservations, limitations, or jurisdictional discretion to protect historic building stock as a condition of nominating or listing a building for preservation or landmark status, especially where such status attracts tax credits, investment of public money, or other incentives. It should be noted that listing a building on the National Register of Historic Places does not exempt it from compliance with state or local building code requirements.

Strategies:

- Assemble a “development standards task force” that will further investigate the building code issues.
 - The committee should at least consist of the fire chief, building inspectors, various city staff, developers, and citizens.
 - The committee should be specifically charged with finding creative solutions for urban development/redevelopment. It should serve to assist developers to help guide and alleviate road blocks to the development process.

- Implement code amendments and a review process that is more supportive of urban housing and mixed-use developments.
- The code committee should investigate the feasibility of hiring the appropriate professional to advise the City on methods to improve the codes, ordinances, and development procedures for rehabilitation of buildings within the downtown area.

Existing buildings that were built to comply with an earlier building code or with no code are often still safe and sound. Most existing buildings throughout the United States, including those in New Jersey, are in this category. With a few exceptions, these buildings continue to be occupied, used, and maintained. New Jersey has strong retrofit codes that apply to all existing buildings to ensure their safety. It is no longer logical that a building which can remain unimproved must be upgraded in numerous respects, many of which provide very little safety improvement, simply because the owner elects to improve the building. This approach often deters any improvement.

Both in New Jersey and nationally, the building code, which is oriented towards new construction, can unnecessarily add to the time and expense of rehabilitating existing buildings because it was not written with existing buildings in mind. For new buildings, complying with the construction code is a straightforward process, but it is difficult to apply the code rationally and predictably to existing buildings. Because developers and building owners cannot predict with certainty what will be required to bring a deteriorated building back into use, projects that pose the greatest uncertainty in terms of time and resources are not attempted and the buildings remain unused.

Thus, the challenge facing New Jersey was to develop provisions for existing buildings that were rational, predictable, and delivered safe and sound rehabilitated structures.

New Jersey's Rehabilitation Subcode



Objective 3: Attract new residential units in downtown.

Explanation:

Successful and sustainable urban areas are those that bring people to live, work, play, and learn in the urban center. There are many practical and intrinsic advantages of attracting a critical mass of people back to downtown. Urban planners and strategists have known for years “rooftops” or resident populations become engines that drive a diversified economy including retail and neighborhood support. Urban dwellers tend to spend more, be more entrepreneurial, more involved in community leadership and committed to a sense of community.

People who live downtown do not require major new investments in expensive City infrastructure or services due to existing fire stations, police zones, and other basic services. People who live in the central city do not tend to congest roadways during peak hours, instead they tend to open and grow businesses in the same area.

Advantages of downtown housing are:

- *Support Overall Economic Development* - Downtown can become a much greater center of residential inner-city reinvestment. The presence of a substantial population living downtown makes it more attractive as a location for both business and cultural reinvestment and retail activities. Individuals and families are increasingly choosing places to live based on lifestyle opportunities and quality of life rather than following a job location. These same individuals create economic vitality through their creative and entrepreneurial activities.
- *Improved Safety and Security* - The best crime prevention is the presence of people. A stable residential population is the best way of achieving an around-the-clock presence in the urban core, increasing both the perception and reality of security. In the adjacent neighborhoods, both existing and potential, similar effects can be achieved through infill development and the progressive upgrading of substandard housing units.
- *Use of Historic Resources* - The use of specific historic resources, as well as proper-



The Holt was once a popular hotel in downtown Wichita Falls. It has recently been converted into residential with 41 units.



Resident parking is available and gated behind the Holt



ties within broader historic districts and areas, should be considered in the development of central city housing. While older core area office, warehouse, commercial, and hotel structures are difficult to reuse for their original purposes, they sometimes lend themselves to housing adaptation. Likewise, renovation of existing historic buildings can provide a base for strong, stable downtown residences; examples such as the Holt and La Salle Crossing illustrate how these can be anchors for general urban revitalization.

- *Services and Retail Will Follow Housing Development* - Residential support services can be phased in as critical mass of housing is realized.
- *Civic Image* - A growing and diverse residential population downtown creates a strong and attractive image for the City's tourists and businesses, as well as for residents of the greater metropolitan area.
- *Realize Greatest Value from Public Investments* - Downtown housing developments will maximize the return on existing public investment in capital and local government services. The concentration of uses results in the most efficient distribution of city services by utilizing existing infrastructure. Furthermore, people living closer to where they work will result in overall savings in energy and reduced travel (which contribute to improving air quality).
- *Growth in Sales and Ad Valorem Tax Base* - A stable and vigorous central city residential community will create a more lively and attractive retail environment for residents and non-residents alike, leading to greater sales tax revenues. In addition, this experience in other cities indicates new housing development and improvements to existing properties will enhance the long term, property values of all downtown properties, yielding increased as ad valorem tax receipts.

Residential development alone isn't going to sustain the economic growth of downtown Wichita Falls, but it can definitely help energize new development. In general, downtowns provide an ideal environment for mixed-income, walkable, vibrant neighborhoods and attract residents looking for a sense of place that can be difficult to find in a suburban setting.

Strategies:

- Rehabilitate older structures to residential uses.
- The best crime prevention is the presence of people. Attracting downtown residential will not only provide people a place to live, but when the number of people are increased in an area it helps to prevent a large percentage of crime.
- Promote a variety of housing options including high rise, condominiums, single/two family infill in greater downtown area, senior citizen/assisted living, and artist live/work lofts.
- Develop open space/pocket parks to support urban residential living.

Downtown Housing Units	
La Salle Crossing	15
The Holt	41
Travis Crossing	11
Franklin Place Apartments	17
The Plantation	27
Aztec Apartments	12
Austin School Lofts	25
Midtown Manor	150
Total	298
Housing Units within Downtown Core	67



Example of studio apartments in a downtown area



Existing Residential in Downtown





Objective 4: Develop a retail strategy that emphasizes “destination” retail.

Explanation:

Currently, downtown retailers are spread out across the core. In between, an assortment of vacant store fronts discourage shoppers from strolling from one store to the next. For downtown to become a retail destination, a strong mix of tenants filling storefronts within a core area will need to be present in order to draw customers from competing centers. Creating a strategy to promote retail downtown must start with an understanding of what kinds of retail are appropriate for the area. The primary customers for downtown retailers will be residents living in downtown and in the surrounding neighborhoods, employees working downtown, and visitors to downtown from other parts of Wichita Falls or other areas in the region.

The figures below provide insight into the different types of retail. While community, regional and super regional retailers will likely continue to locate in new commercial centers outside of downtown, convenience and neighborhood retail located downtown will serve the first two groups of customers. However, retail with the ability to draw customers from a larger trade area will be needed to attract the third group of customers. This type of retail is generally referred to as “destination” retail.

GENERAL RETAIL REQUIREMENTS

Type of Center	Typical Gross Leasable Area (Sq. Ft)	Gross Leasable Range (Sq. Ft)	Minimum Site Area (Acres)	Primary Trade Area Radius (miles)	Primary Trade Area Drive Time (minutes)	Minimum Population Support Required
Convenience	20,000	15,000 - 30,000				
Neighborhood	50,000	30,000 - 100,000	3 - 10	1.5	5 - 10	3,000 - 40,000
Community	150,000	100,000 - 450,000	10 - 30	3 - 5	10 - 20	40,000 - 150,000
Regional	450,000	300,000 - 900,000	10 - 60	8.0	20	150,000+
Super Regional	900,000	500,000 - 2 mn	15 - 100+	12.0	30	300,000+

SOURCE: Urban Land Institute, Shopping Center Development Handbook

The Urban Land Institute describes destination retail in the following paragraph: *“Increasingly, entertainment and recreational trips (not just shopping trips) are generating retail sales. After a pleasant meal, people quite often look for opportuni-*

ties to extend the experience by browsing in a bookstore, shopping for a special piece of clothing or luxury item (like flowers, jewelry, or artwork), or taking in a movie or show. In this context, the downtown pedestrian routes, which are deliberately designed and mixed to provide views to the next leisure retail shopping opportunity, become vital. This form of retailing (known as destination retail) is not particularly suited to shopping centers; people rarely choose to spend a special night out at the mall.”

Downtown Wichita Falls was the primary commercial center for the region for over 50 years. It has the infrastructure and buildings to support a wide range of different retailers. However, concerted efforts must be made to actively promote downtown as a retail center. A careful assembly of a mix of convenience, neighborhood, and destination retailers can restore Downtown Wichita Falls as a premier retail destination in the region.

Strategies:

- Develop and implement a retail recruitment program. This program should be designed to attract and support desirable retailers in the downtown core area. Elements of this program should include:
 - A regularly updated retail trade area and corresponding demographic information
 - A current database of available properties accessible on-line
 - Clearly defined incentives and/or business resources
 - Descriptions of projects in the downtown trade area that will affect retail demand
 - As part of the program design, catalog downtown retailers to establish what exists and identify what goods and services are needed to attract visitors and serve downtown employees and residents in downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods.



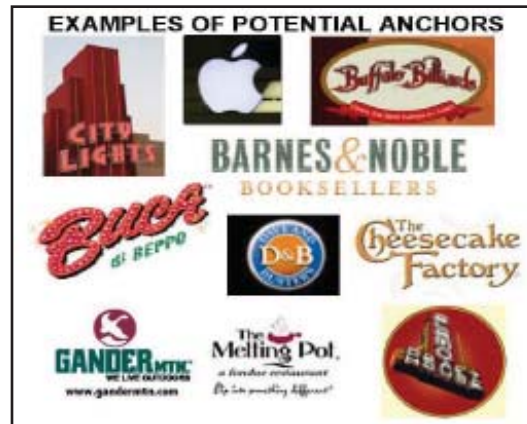
STANDARD RETAIL TYPES

Convenience	Neighborhood	Community	Regional / Super Regional
Minimart	Supermarket	Junior Dept Store	Full-line Dept Store
Restaurant	Drugstore	Discount Dept Store	Fashion Dept Store
Beauty Parlor	Discount Dept Store	Supermarket	Megaplex
Dry Cleaner	Restaurant	Off-Price Superstore	Entertainment Ctr
Fast Food	Furniture Store	Variety Store	Food Court
Medical / Dental Office	Hardware Store	Family-wear Store	Large-Format
	Automotive Store	Furniture Store	Specialty Store
	Liquor Store	Sporting Goods	Large-Format Off-Price Store
	Video Rental	Drugstore	
	Bank	Office Supply Store	
		Cinema	

SOURCE: Urban Land Institute, Shopping Center Development Handbook



- Examples of downtown retail recruitment strategies include Knoxville, TN; Lincoln, NB; and St. Charles, IL:
 - i. Knoxville: http://web.knoxnews.com/pdf/1017downtown_knoxville_retail.pdf
 - ii. Lincoln: <http://www.downtownlincoln.org/LincolnRetailFindings.pdf>
 - iii. St. Charles: <http://www.ci.st-charles.il.us/departments/cdd/downtown/1.html>
- Support the development of a catalyst project that promotes destination retail among its mix of uses. This project should be structured as a public/private partnership and should include a significant retail anchor.
 - The anchor should be a major, exciting draw that cannot necessarily be found in a shopping mall. It could be an entertainment venue, a “special-occasion” restaurant, or a niche retail store.
- Encourage the concentration of retail in a defined district to create a critical mass of retail activity. This district should become a core of continuous street-level retail that offers a diverse mix of interesting shopping options for downtown residents, employees, and visitors alike.



Objective 5: Develop a comprehensive strategy for building a Convention Center Hotel and upgrade existing hotel stock within the walkable core area.

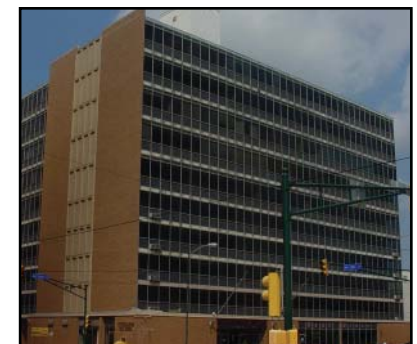
Explanation:

Wichita Falls is fortunate to have a variety of amenities within downtown for visitors and tourists. The Multi-purpose Events Center (MPEC), Wichita River Corridor, along with numerous businesses, antique stores, museums, and cultural venues are key assets. Events such as the Hotter-'n Hell Hundred bring thousands of visitors to Wichita Falls each year. Other local festivals take place downtown and have potential to be a large draw for visitors. However, the current supply of quality hotel rooms within the heart of downtown is woefully inadequate. Quality hotel rooms exist on the outskirts of downtown but are not within walking distance to these attractions. Data shows a displacement of older, less expensive establishments; however, higher end establishments are doing well. Data suggests that Wichita Falls could accommodate an additional high-end hotel (average \$100/ per night).

Currently, the only hotel near the MPEC is the Howard Johnson. It is located in the north-west corner of the expanded downtown area and is over four blocks from the core. While this is easily accessible to the MPEC, it is not within easy walking distance to the center of downtown. If such a hotel were to go downtown, it would be difficult to compete with comparable hotels in perceived better locations and might require an initial public subsidy. An additional hotel in downtown would be convenient for visitors to United Regional Healthcare, the MPEC, theater/cultural arts, and downtown businesses.

Strategies:

- It is recommended that a convention center hotel be considered. This would likely need to be a public/private partnership, but a strategy and feasibility study should be developed by the City and Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- Upgrade existing stock of hotel, specifically Crescent Plaza located on 8th Street.



Crescent Plaza Hotel
Downtown Wichita Falls



TRANSPORTATION



Transportation

Transportation is a vital component of a downtown area. This section addresses both the mode of transportation and how vehicular traffic circulates through the streets. The vision for Wichita Falls is to become a pedestrian-friendly downtown that encourages all walks of life at all times of the day. Currently, downtown serves the daytime business community and is very vehicular-friendly. The City has done a good job in respecting the original town grid and has preserved the urban fabric that makes an urban core successful.

Many streets currently act more as a thoroughfare than a walkable corridor. In order to promote a more pedestrian-friendly environment, streetscaping elements should be encouraged such as trees, landscaping, pedestrian lighting, street furnishings, banner poles, and crosswalk pavers. Other pedestrian-scaled features should be considered to help promote a sense of place and identify districts. Narrow streets and well-defined crosswalks can provide an easier crossing for a pedestrian and help to alleviate intimidation of vehicular traffic.

Several of the major streets have been identified and recommended for streetscape improvements. In addition, major intersections should be improved to include a traffic signal and bulb-out. A bulb-out is shown on page 36 and includes an inexpensive way to narrow a street at the intersection.

If transportation is to be effective, the maintenance and up-keep of streets and parking lots/structures must take place.

Furthermore, there is a new trend on the horizon that is changing the face of urban development known as Transit Oriented Development or Design (TOD). TOD is becoming a popular form



Transit Oriented Development

of mixed-use development. TOD's create compact, walkable communities centered around multi-modal transportation opportunities. Because of the location of downtown and its close proximity of major rail lines and future bus transfer center, higher density, mixed-use TOD's should be considered.

The following are transportation related recommendations. Detailed strategies for each objective are outlined in the following chapters.

Summary of Transportation Objectives

- Ensure high-quality maintenance and aesthetic upkeep of streets and right-of-ways is a top priority.
- Improve non-signalized intersections and vehicular circulation throughout the downtown core.
- Create a policy that addresses maintenance and operation of privately owned downtown surface parking lots. Enforce strict parking regulations for downtown parking lots and encourage shared use agreements that allow for free night and weekend parking. All parking areas should be screened to include a decorative fence and/or line of shrubs.



Objective 1: Ensure high-quality maintenance and aesthetic upkeep of streets and right-of-ways is a top priority.

Explanation:

Maintenance and aesthetic upkeep of roadways, right-of-ways, and sidewalks is very important to encourage revitalization. Well-maintained streets serve as silent marketing tools that have a great impact on pedestrians, vehicles, and developers, although its affect seems minor.

Pedestrians aren't likely to walk along overgrown sidewalks or hidden areas where the line of sight is obstructed or the perception of safety becomes an issue. Likewise, vehicular traffic will avoid poorly, if possible, maintained streets. In order to encourage new development and reinvestment in urban areas, maintenance of older streets and right-of-ways are particularly important.

One way of maintaining public infrastructure to a higher level of standard is by creating a special improvement district, often referred to as a "public improvement district" (PID). A PID is a special assessment district created to maintain certain public amenities and improvements, typically public space and infrastructure, within an established boundary. A PID is also referred to as a self-assessment district, because the property owners agree amongst themselves to pay into the district, in return for services they agree to fund.

There are many benefits of creating a PID. Some benefits include, but are not limited to, a means for improving the infrastructure, maintenance, landscaping, security, parking, contract services, marketing and special events. PID's require special legislation but have been proven successful to help promote economic growth in an area.

Strategies:

- Create a PID in downtown. Downtown Wichita Falls Development, Inc. and the City should work with property owners to determine a boundary that includes the core area at a minimum.



Streets in downtown Wichita Falls in need of repair





Objective 2: Improve non-signalized intersections and vehicular circulation through the downtown core.

Explanation:

The improvement in the safety of non-signalized and signalized intersections and their approaches is very important. Safety improvement measures include design modifications, changes to traffic control devices, enforcement, and education.

In urban and downtown areas, two-thirds of the pedestrian injuries occur at intersections.

The solution is to design intersections and improve vehicular circulation that:

- Encourage pedestrian use in lieu of mid-block crossing locations.
- Make pedestrians as visible as possible.
- Make pedestrians actions as predictable as possible.
- Slow vehicular traffic.

Downtown Wichita Falls has several intersections with high volumes of vehicular traffic that aren't signalized. Crosswalks are non-existent or not visible in some locations which makes it difficult for pedestrians to cross the street. One factor that increases pedestrian traffic is the safety feel while walking. Ensuring a pedestrian's safety could be done in a way that is low-cost, which will in turn increase pedestrian traffic.



Bulb-outs reduce crossing distances for pedestrians

Improving intersections and vehicular circulation involves the coordination and integration of a number of design elements, including crosswalks, curb ramps, curb bulbs, turning radii, and signalization.

Strategies:

- Signalizing intersections within the core. Currently, downtown promotes "in and out" traffic. Consider signalizing suggested intersections as illustrated on the following page. The non-signalized intersections that are proposed for signalization are most

important for pedestrian safety and vehicular circulation.

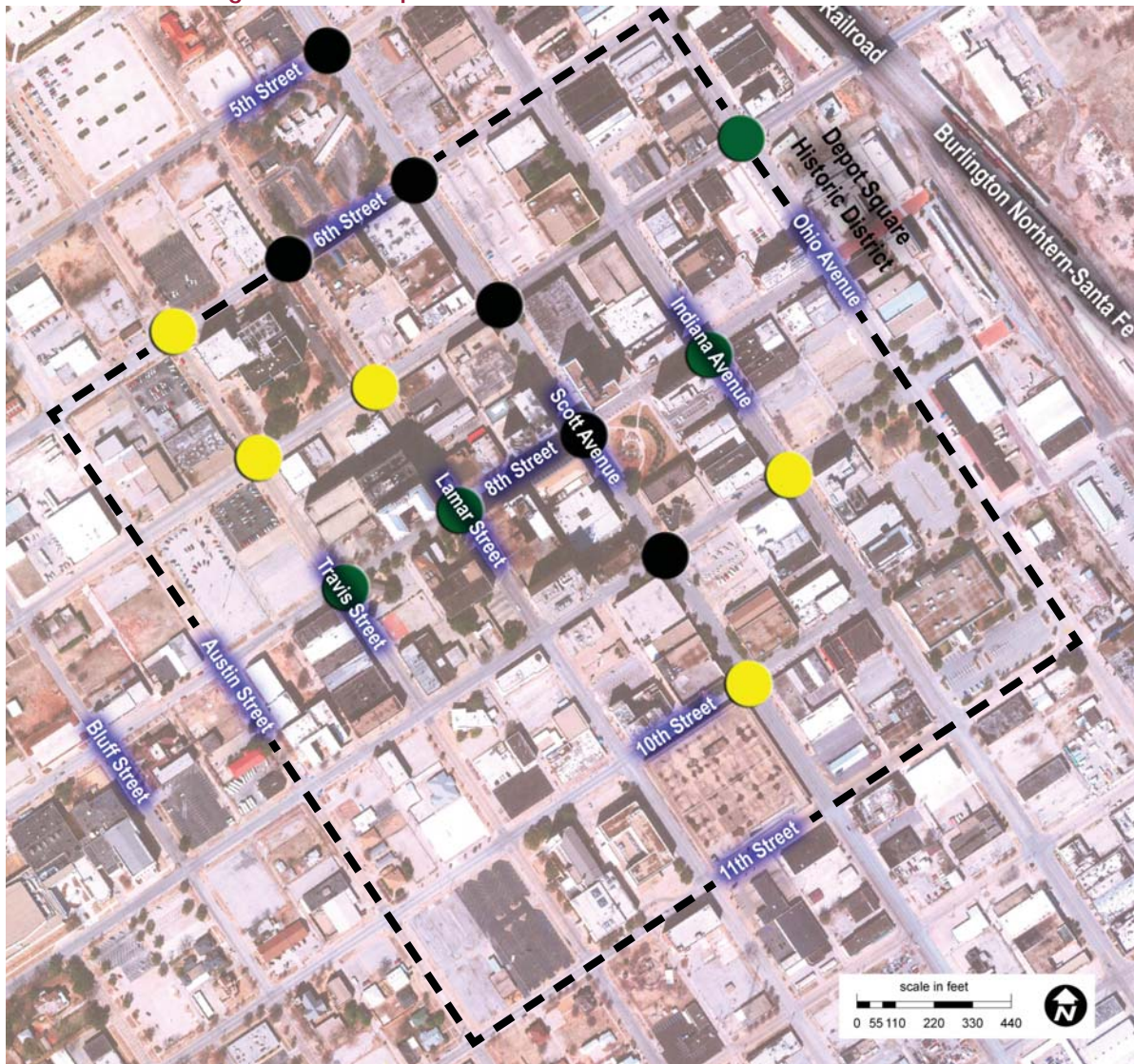
- Provide crosswalks at intersections with high-volume pedestrian traffic.
 - A crosswalk creates a visible indication for both motorist and pedestrians as to where pedestrians may be expected to cross a roadway.
 - Generally, marked crosswalks are located at all open legs of signalized intersections. When used with curb bulb-outs, signage, and illumination, the visibility of pedestrian crossings can be enhanced.
 - Most crosswalks are expected at intersections, the installation of crosswalks at mid-block locations may also be desirable under some conditions when medians or refuge islands are used.
- Reduce the speed of vehicular movement through traffic calming methods. Traffic calming is a traffic management approach that involves a full range of methods to slow cars through different environments. Some traffic-calming techniques include:
 - Street landscaping
 - Pedestrian amenities
 - Bulb-outs
 - Colored or textured crosswalks
- Powder coat masts and arms of intersections



Example of traffic calming method - raised crosswalk



Downtown Core Signalization Map



Legend

- Existing Signalized Intersections
- Proposed Signalized Intersections (Short-term)
- Proposed Signalized Intersections (Long-term)
- Downtown Core Area



Objective 3: Create a policy that addresses maintenance and operation of privately owned downtown surface parking lots.

Explanation:

Many of the lots in downtown are privately owned. Several of these are poorly maintained, have little to no screening, and are located along major corridors or at prominent intersections. While parking is necessary to serve the adjacent businesses, efforts can be made to screen the lots and maintain the concrete, asphalt, curb stops, and signage in a higher quality manner than what currently exist today.

In order to encourage night life, retail, and entertainment downtown, parking must be available, preferably free parking. Often successful urban areas will enact shared-use agreements to encourage multiple uses of parking lots. For example, business owners may restrict their lots from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during the weekday for their tenants only, but allow public parking after 5:00 p.m. on weekdays and on weekends.

Strategies:

- Enforce strict parking regulations for downtown parking lots.
- Encourage shared-use agreements that allow for free night and weekend parking.
- Require screening of all parking lots along street and pedestrian ways, particularly along major pedestrian corridors and intersections.
 - Screening can include, but isn't limited to, landscaping and ornamental fence.



Example of poor landscape/screening, streetscape along sidewalks.

- Enforce quality maintenance of downtown parking lots.
 - Upkeep of concrete, asphalt, curb stops, and signage should be maintained by owners.



Example of poor edge treatment along major street corridor.



Avoid large surface parking lots at major intersections. Example: 8th St. and Travis St.



Example: 8th St. and Indiana Ave.



ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



Economic Development

To better understand the economic conditions of downtown, Downtown Wichita Falls Development, Inc. administered a survey to downtown property owners and business owners. A copy of the survey can be found in the Appendix.

The survey does not provide a complete overview of downtown conditions due to the lack of participation from some property owners. However, it does provide insight into the real estate market downtown.

The 20 survey responses collected account for approximately 1.1 million square feet of space downtown. Of this space, 602,450 square feet is occupied, which is a 54% occupancy rate. Note this figure does not reflect usable space, only existing space. The occupancy rate for usable space should be considerably higher; however, the occupancy rate for existing space is an indicator of the true capacity of downtown.

Space is leased out from \$9 per square foot per year to \$12 per square foot per year. Buildings are listed for sale from \$13 per square foot to \$28 per square foot. In comparison, space in Downtown Fort Worth ranges from leases for \$16 per square foot per year for Class B office space to \$32 per square foot per year for prime retail space.

The impressive boom and subsequent decline of Wichita Falls' oil and gas sector left

downtown with excess office capacity, much of which has been vacant for many years and is in need of significant renovations. The resulting surplus of downtown office space has softened the office market across the city, depressing lease rates. Nevertheless, property assessment values and taxes are low enough to enable downtown property owners to operate profitably in spite of low occupancy rates.

The retail market downtown is also facing difficult conditions. With vacant retail space from relocated department stores, pharmacies, and various sized specialty retailers, the downtown retail market also faces an over-supply situation, which has put downward pressure on both sales and lease pricing in downtown. Demand for retail space remains much higher in other parts of the city, primarily in the area surrounding Sikes Center and the Lawrence Road commercial district. In addition, the population living in and around downtown has declined over the past 20 to 30 years as new residential development has moved southwest. As a result, the demographics surrounding downtown may not attract retailers other than niche retailers. These retailers are stores that sell unique items not sold anywhere else in Wichita Falls, such as antique stores, boutiques, and specialty stores.

The downtown residential market appears much stronger than the office and retail markets. Three residential projects - Travis Crossing, LaSalle Crossing, and the Holt Hotel Lofts - have added 67 units. The occupancy rate for these units is currently 100%. In fact, the Holt Hotel Lofts has a waiting list for some apartment floor plans.

In summary, the high commercial vacancy rate downtown creates challenging market conditions downtown, but creates ample redevelopment opportunities. With at least 500,000 square feet of space vacant downtown, market conditions are not likely to improve dramatically until a significant portion of this space is absorbed and the balance between supply and demand for office and retail space downtown is restored. The demand for downtown housing, however, is strong. Thus *a strategy that features downtown residential development as a means of stimulating demand for retail and office space should be pursued.*

Background

The economic development vision for Downtown Wichita Falls is to become the prime destination in the region for conducting business, shopping, and entertainment. To achieve

SUMMARY STATISTICS

Downtown Wichita Falls

Total Square Feet	1,117,700	Average Date	1935
Square Feet Occupied	602,450	Oldest	1888
% Occupied	54%	Newest	1987
Price (\$ / Sq. Ft. annually)	\$9 - \$12	Survey Response	20

Downtown Wichita Falls

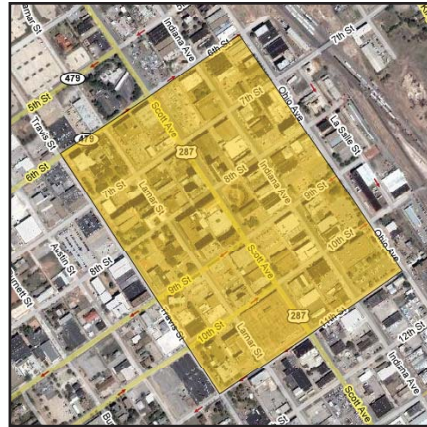
Address	Sq. Ft	Price	Price/SF
Listings:			
1000 Scott (Office/Warehouse)	100,000	\$2,860,000	\$28.60
901 Lamar (Office)	10,518	\$275,000	\$26.15
600 7th (Retail)	2,500	\$42,500	\$17.00
1100 Lamar (Office/Residential)	41,360	\$595,000	\$14.39
609 7th (Retail)	4,416	\$59,000	\$13.36
Recent Sales:			
901 9th (Mar 2007)	14,024	\$173,823	\$12.39

Source: Loopnet.



this goal, this chapter lays out strategies to encourage and support private investment in the core area of downtown through the strategic application of public resources, both financial and human.

The core area of downtown is defined as the area bound by Travis Street, 6th Street, Ohio Avenue, and 11th Street. Due to the size of downtown and the number of vacant, blighted buildings, the consulting team recommends focusing on the core in the short-term. Once private investment is flowing into the core area without public assistance, the focus can then move beyond the core. By narrowing the focus, the City will likely see the results of its efforts more rapidly.



The Economic Case for Downtown Revitalization

Lively downtowns play a central role in the economy of a community. Downtowns are composed of various sizes of buildings and spaces that accommodate the needs of a wide assortment of uses from a small business to a large department store. As a result, they can house an array of activities from professional services to fine dining to arts in a relatively concentrated area. These activities create jobs and draw visitors and residents downtown. In this way, revitalized downtowns help to create economic opportunity in communities.

In addition, downtowns create a sense of place helping to differentiate downtowns from other commercial districts and cities from

"A healthy and vibrant downtown boosts the economic health and quality of life in a community. Specifically, it creates jobs, incubates small businesses, reduces sprawl, protects property values, and increases the community's options for goods and services. A healthy downtown is a symbol of community pride and history."

- the Pew Partnership for Civic Change

other cities. The sense of place created by vibrant downtowns is authentic and difficult to reproduce because its infrastructure, buildings, and character have developed and evolved over time. This uniqueness cannot be replicated in a new development. This sense of place associated with a vibrant downtown can be a community's primary asset that defines its identity and plays an active role in attracting talent and visitors.

Methodology and Approach

TIP Strategies, Inc. completed the economic development portion of the Downtown Master Plan for the City of Wichita Falls. To understand the area's challenges and opportunities, we participated in and performed the following activities:

- A review of existing economic and demographic data, including population growth, educational attainment levels, occupational information, employment growth, major employers, and other relevant statistics for Wichita Falls.
- Tours of downtown Wichita Falls, which allow for a better understanding of the "downtown product" from a real estate standpoint.
- Interviews with area stakeholders, including face-to-face interviews with business and community leaders.
- Interviews with area brokers and realtors to understand the downtown real estate market and outlook.
- Meetings and workshops to establish priorities for appropriate development concepts.

Economic development is defined as *the application of public resources to stimulate private investment*. With this in mind, the role of the public sector gains a clarity that other definitions obscure. Public officials and local government employees do not create jobs or generate wealth. They do control significant resources. Directing these resources effectively and efficiently is their paramount duty. Effective programs should be judged by how well public resources can create a response from private investors. In this context, the City of Wichita Falls must be aware of how its policy decisions as well as its support of projects inside and outside of downtown will affect private investment in the downtown.

Figure 1 on the following page illustrates an economic development model which focuses on the factors that play important roles in stimulating economic vitality in a community. In contrast to traditional economic development models that employ mostly industrial



recruitment strategies, TIP's model acknowledges that employers are increasingly locating themselves where talent is found, and talent is moving to places they want to live. In other words, today's talent decides where they want to live first and finds work where they want to live. For this reason, employers are locating in communities that possess the quality of place necessary to attract the talent they need.

As a result, quality of place issues are central to a community's success in economic development.

A revitalized Downtown Wichita Falls can significantly enhance the city's quality of place. It will aid in the attraction and retention of talent which will, in turn, aid in the attraction and retention of employers. In each of the focus groups conducted as part of this project, participants commented that a revitalized downtown with entertainment and shopping options would greatly enhance Wichita Falls' ability to attract and retain workers and their spouses.

The key to the City's involvement in downtown revitalization is understanding what makes a vibrant downtown. Figure 2 depicts the downtown development model. Attracting businesses and new residents to locate downtown will support more retail and entertainment options. Likewise, specialty retail and entertainment options will serve to attract more residents, visitors and businesses downtown. Stimulating private investment in all four areas – entertainment, residential, employment, and retail – will help downtown achieve the critical mass it needs to perpetuate desirable growth and be self-sustaining.

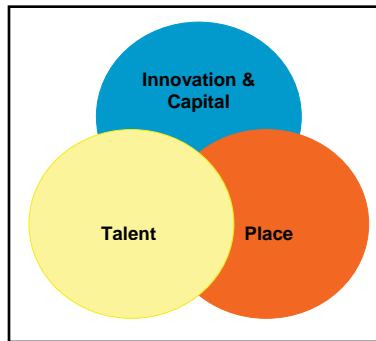


Figure 1

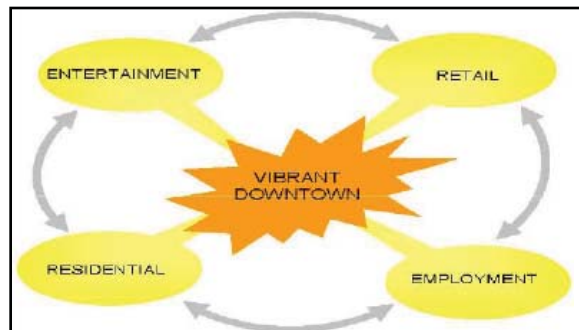


Figure 2

The following are economic development related recommendations. Detailed strategies for each objective are outlined in the following chapters.

Summary of Economic Development Objectives

- Support the establishment of “anchors” to build a critical mass of activity.
- Target professional services, company headquarters, and entrepreneurship to alleviate the surplus of office space downtown.
- Secure funding sources to finance downtown revitalization initiatives and projects. A new PID and renewal of Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone are recommended.
- Establish a formal incentives policy to encourage private investment.
- Design and launch an effective marketing campaign to promote downtown as the prime area of Wichita Falls to “live, work, and play.”
- Track growth and development in downtown to show progress toward established goals.



Objective 1: Support the establishment of “anchors” to build a critical mass of activity.

Explanation:

To be vibrant, a downtown needs a mass of residents and workers to support businesses during the day and after work. Downtown Wichita Falls currently serves as a hub for public sector employment, related professional services, financial institutions, and the oil and gas sector. However, these uses attract people downtown during normal business hours, leaving downtown after-hours a rather desolate place. Although retailers, arts organizations, restaurants, and bars are scattered throughout the central business district, they struggle to attract enough customers to their establishments – especially those establishments that depend on customers after 5:00 p.m.

To change this imbalance, a group of key institutions and establishments must be present to ensure more people are downtown during the day, after work, and on the weekends. In other words, the downtown needs anchors to strengthen its draw during the work day and extend its activities into after-hours and weekends.

Like anchors in a shopping center, anchors located in and adjacent to the core of downtown will serve to bring a stable volume of visitors to the area. In doing so, anchors will strengthen their respective sectors (employment, retail, residential, or entertainment) and support a higher level of economic activity in general. As the level of activity and choice of activities rises, downtown will become a more viable and self-sustaining destination.

Strategies:

- Identify anchors that will appeal to primary demographic segments in Wichita Falls: young adults (MSU students & SAFB trainees), downtown professionals, families, and retirees. Ideas may include:
 - The development of a flagship mixed-use project that will include entertainment options, fine dining, retail, and residential units. This project should be designed with the goal of promoting downtown as an after-hours destination. However, careful attention should be paid to attract tenants that complement, rather than compete with, existing downtown businesses.

- A new city hall located within or adjacent to the downtown core to serve as a primary employment anchor.
 - A one-stop Entrepreneurship Center in the downtown core. (See Strategy 2 under following objective).
- Spread the anchors across the core of downtown such that pedestrian and vehicular traffic must pass other tenants when traveling between anchors. This location strategy will provide heightened visibility for other tenants located in the core.
 - Ensure accessibility of anchors through the provision of adequate parking as well as public transportation connections.

an·chor (n)

- 1. a reliable or principal support*
- 2. a large business (as a department store) that attracts customers and other businesses to a shopping center or mall*

Source: the Random House Unabridged Dictionary



Objective 2: Target professional services, company headquarters, and entrepreneurship to alleviate the surplus of office space downtown.

Explanation:

Downtown Wichita Falls currently has an over-supply of office space which contributes to a soft office market city-wide. In addition, workers' wages in many office occupations, including business and finance, legal, architecture, engineering, computer, and management, fall below the state and national average. This wage differential is due to an over-supply of these types of workers.

Stimulating demand for office space and occupations will help alleviate these over-supply situations to strengthen both the office market and job market city-wide. This can be accomplished by recruiting and supporting the development of more businesses that require office workers and encouraging them to locate in downtown.

Furthermore, this strategy will have another important benefit. The types of jobs required by these businesses match more closely with the skills of MSU graduates as well as Wichita Falls ISD graduates who have gone off to college in other cities and wish to return. Thus, strengthening the job market for office jobs will also improve the city's ability to retain talent.

Strategies:

- Actively recruit professional services firms and company headquarters to downtown through a well-targeted campaign. (See Defense Diversification Plan – Strategy 5).
- Facilitate the creation of a one-stop Entrepreneurship Center to foster the growth of new businesses in Wichita Falls. This center should be a joint venture between Midwestern State University's Lalani Center for Entrepreneurship and Free Enterprise, the Small Business Development Center, Vernon College, the Board of Commerce and Industry, and the City of Wichita Falls. This will ensure coordination and continuity of services to minimize duplication of services. (See Defense Diversification Plan – Strategy and Appendix C: Entrepreneurship Assessment)

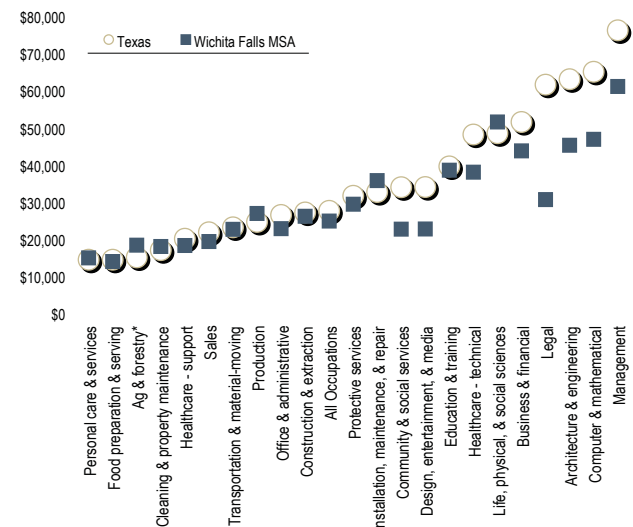
Objective 3: Secure funding sources to finance downtown revitalization initiatives and projects.

Explanation:

The City of Wichita Falls created its first Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) in March 1986. The reasons cited for creating the zone include:

- “a need to preserve and expand the tax base;
- preservation of the City's historical and geographical center;
- elimination of urban decay;
- prevention of urban sprawl;
- creation of new jobs;
- capture of money from outside the local area; and
- improvement of the quality of life for city residents.”

Median Salaries for Primary Occupational Groups



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006 data released May 17, 2007

*nonfarm

Since that time, the district has committed over \$3.1 million to support 26 projects that contributed over \$74 million in investment within the area. However, the district is set to expire on December 31, 2008.



In addition to the funds available through Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, the City of Wichita Falls has dedicated a quarter cent sales tax for Section 4A projects and a quarter cent sales tax for Section 4B projects. These 4A/4B funds may be used to fund certain types of economic development projects, as permitted by state law. However, these funds are presently not specifically dedicated to downtown.

Improving downtown's physical infrastructure and assets and supporting private re-development efforts will be an expensive undertaking. Cities across Texas and the nation have adopted creative strategies to provide financing for the revitalization of their downtowns and key districts. Aside from providing much-needed financing, dedicating specific funds to key districts is a way for cities to demonstrate their commitment to their urban cores. This will also inspire private sector confidence in the district.

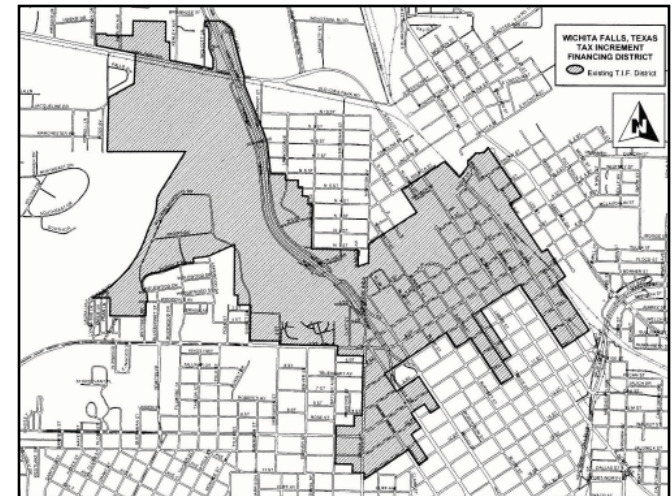
The Appendix provides an overview of available financing tools.

Strategies:

- Create necessary financing district(s) that will provide adequate funds and flexibility in spending those funds for the projects and initiatives. In addition, the burden of financing should be shared among the different stakeholders.
- Establish the organizational capacity to manage the financing district(s). Many cities have created non-profit organizations managed by district boards and have staff to handle the day-to-day operations of the programs. This organization can also spearhead the downtown revitalization efforts, manage and guide investment in downtown to promote the vision of this master plan, and organize and advocate for downtown business and property owners.
- Set a goal to invest a set percentage of 4A and/or 4B funds in downtown projects. Attracting primary employers and supporting community development downtown can help to stimulate growth and counteract growth pressures in other areas of the city.
 - According to the Attorney General's Economic Development Handbook 2006, Section 4A and 4B funds "can be used to fund the provision of land, buildings, equipment, facilities, expenditures, targeted infrastructure and improvements that are for the creation or retention of primary jobs for projects such as manufacturing and industrial facilities, research and development facilities, military facilities, includ-

ing closed or realigned military bases, recycling facilities, distribution centers, small warehouse facilities, primary job training facilities for use by institutions of higher education, and regional or national corporate headquarters facilities. [They] may also fund eligible job training classes, certain career centers and certain infrastructure improvements which promote or develop new or expanded business enterprises."

- Section 4B funds "can additionally fund projects that are typically considered to be community development initiatives. For example, authorized categories under Section 4B include, among other items, land, buildings, equipment, facilities, expenditures, and improvements for professional and amateur sports facilities, park facilities and events, entertainment and tourist facilities, and affordable housing."
- Secure any available federal and state funds that may facilitate revitalization efforts.
 - Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and various programs of the National Historic Preservation Trust (<http://www.nationaltrust.org/funding/nonprofit.html>) could provide assistance for certain building renovations.
 - Join the Texas Downtown Association (www.texasdowntown.org) and the Texas Mainstreet Program (<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/mainstreet/msdefault.html>) to become better informed of funding opportunities as well as best practices.





- The consulting team was asked to review the potential for creating a Community Development Corporation (CDC) to stimulate reinvestment in the downtown. CDCs are non-profit, community-based organizations that aim to promote economic stability in their communities. Most commonly, CDCs operate in low-income areas and are involved in housing development, planning and organization, and homeownership programs. In addition, some are involved in commercial and business development, and workforce and youth programs (Urban Institute, 1999).

Currently, in Wichita Falls, the roles fulfilled by a CDC are provided by a strong network of non-profit organizations and public sector programs and are focused on East Wichita Falls. For example, Habitat for Humanity is involved in the construction of affordable homes for qualified families and the Housing Authority of Wichita Falls manages affordable rental units. The City of Wichita Falls, through its Neighborhood Resources Division, assists low-income families in the purchase of their first home through the first-time homebuyers program and infill housing program. The City also manages programs to assist low-income homeowners in the maintenance of their homes. The Small Business Development Center and ACCION Texas provide assistance, including the provision of access to credit, to low-income small business owners. Workforce Solutions North Texas, Interfaith Ministries, the local higher-education institutions, and a number of other non-profits provide necessary workforce training.

In addition, Downtown Wichita Falls is adjacent to the city's lowest income areas but does not currently house many low-income residents. The type of programs normally administered by CDCs (community development-oriented programs) is not appropriate for downtown revitalization initiatives. A new CDC in Wichita Falls would be more appropriately focused on east and north Wichita Falls.

For these reasons, the consulting team does not recommend the creation of a separate CDC to focus on downtown revitalization. Instead, an organization that manages the day-to-day operations of the financing districts should function as a development corporation (See Strategy 2).

Objective 4: Establish a formal incentives policy to encourage private investment.

Explanation:

Wichita Falls is generally growing in a southwesterly direction. To overcome this trend, the City of Wichita Falls must commit to stimulating growth in downtown in order to achieve the critical mass it needs to sustain growth without public sector support. Using a portion of the funds dedicated to downtown (as discussed in the previous objective), the City should structure an incentives policy with the goal of directing private investment downtown.

The City currently offers the following incentives for projects in any part of the city:

- Direct assistance (grants) for eligible projects using TIF, 4A, and 4B funds, and
- Property tax abatement.

However, a formal incentives policy for downtown has yet to be established. Incentives policies should be carefully crafted in a manner to ensure they yield a net benefit to area taxpayers. An incentives policy will help to insulate the City from criticism and political pressure when making the decision of whether or not to support a prospect. The following principals are major factors that should be considered when establishing a policy: 1) the targeted investment would not occur without the incentive and 2) the investment should generate new economic activity in the area instead of displacing existing businesses.

Strategies:

- In cooperation with the 4A and 4B Board of Directors, create an incentives policy specific for downtown. The policy should include a statement demonstrating how the proposed incentive relates to the broader economic development strategies. The policy should incorporate a variety of tools, such as:
 - Chapter 380 agreements, property tax abatement, and possibly reimbursement of certain fees.
 - Special programs to help defray renovation costs resulting from asbestos/lead paint remediation, historic preservation, and modernizing buildings to adhere to the city's building code.



- The programs could include grants, a revolving loan fund offering low-interest loans, or both.
- Create a formal cost/benefit model weighing the estimated direct/indirect benefits (e.g., tax base enhancement, increase in retail sales, increase in wage rates) to the incentive costs (e.g., tax abatements, training subsidies, infrastructure improvements) associated with a particular deal.
 - The model should also incorporate the City's objectives for downtown development to ensure that projects promote these goals.
- Structure the programs to include a "claw-back" agreement that guarantees the recovery of incentives funds if the firm does not meet pre-established milestones.
- Establish an application process for prospects wishing to submit a project for consideration in the incentives program.
- Create Web site to publicize information regarding the incentives policy and application process. Post the application and descriptions of programs and process.

Objective 5: Design and launch an effective marketing campaign to promote downtown as the prime area of Wichita Falls to "live, work, and play."

Explanation:

Residents in Wichita Falls participated in interviews, workshops, and focus groups expressed an indifferent to negative impression of downtown. Some believe downtown to be dangerous. Others believe there is little reason to go to downtown. These perceptions demonstrate the need for an internal marketing campaign aimed to change residents' perceptions of downtown.

A negative or indifferent perception is extremely detrimental to downtown businesses and to downtown revitalization efforts. Because word-of-mouth is one of the most powerful marketing tools, a few residents' bad experiences downtown can perpetuate a negative impression in the community and can even travel to external audiences.

To counter the current perceptions of downtown, the City, in conjunction with the other downtown stakeholders, will need to actively promote a more positive image of downtown through a well-coordinated marketing campaign.

Strategies:

- Establish the image downtown stakeholders wish to portray. Build consensus for the image and a primary message to convey this image.
- Design a marketing plan for internal audiences to promote this image. This plan should set out goals based on measurable timelines – six months, one year, two years, and five years.
 - This marketing plan should identify target audiences, effective marketing tools to appropriate for each audience, and strategies for communicating the primary message.
 - It is imperative that actionable and attainable goals set the pace for future marketing inside the community. This will help the city build achievable plans where a Return on Investment (ROI) plays a key role.
- Continue to plan events to draw people downtown. Use annual events such as the St. Patrick's Day Festival, the Downtown Shrimp and Wine Festival, the Downtown City



Lights Parade, and the Hotter-'n Hell Hundred to showcase downtown.

- Make sure events are well-publicized and of high quality. A positive impression of downtown and downtown events must be conveyed at these events in order to keep people coming back.
- The media and public relations strategy should be designed to celebrate the successes of downtown revitalization in order to build momentum for the initiative.
 - Develop a community newsletter focused on downtown. This newsletter should reach out to the community at-large to communicate events, profile businesses, describe new projects, and discuss ideas for improving downtown. An e-newsletter could be distributed to mailing lists maintained by downtown businesses and organizations, BCI, MSU, and Sheppard.
 - Through traditional and non-traditional media sources, profile the catalyst projects and other important projects to raise awareness and generate interest.
- Coordinate the downtown marketing campaign with a city-wide campaign to reduce overlap and leverage co-marketing opportunities.

Why market? To influence perception and cause people to act.

What is the process? First, develop a message. Second, determine the appropriate marketing technique(s) to convey that message.

How to develop the message?

Three elements to consider:

- Who is your target audience?
- What are you trying to tell them?
- What is the desired result?

What are my marketing tools?

Many formats are available:

- Web-based
- Print advertising
- Publicity
- Promotional materials
- Direct mail
- Word of mouth

Objective 6: Track growth and development in downtown to show progress toward established goals.

Explanation:

Putting into place mechanisms for measuring results and outcomes allows organizations to evaluate the effectiveness of their initiatives and programs. Not only does this provide feedback for the organization to use to modify and strengthen their program, but it also can be used as a valuable marketing tool to foster support for successful programs.

For the downtown revitalization initiatives, the most important metrics to demonstrate growth and development are indicators of market conditions. To show measurable progress, the baseline market conditions of downtown must be established. In this way, variation from the baseline can be quantified. However, these metrics must be measured, analyzed, and reported regularly.

Strategies:

- Continue to collect survey responses to establish the baseline conditions of the downtown market. The key metrics that should be tracked are:
 - Housing units (total, rentable, occupied, average price per square foot)
 - Office space (total square feet, useable square feet, occupied square feet, average price per square foot)
 - Retail space (total square feet, useable square feet, occupied square feet, average price per square foot)
 - Arts & cultural establishments (number of establishments, visitors)
- This survey should be distributed at least annually to track growth in each of these areas.
- With the information obtained from the surveys, produce a report card summarizing the data and achievements in the revitalization efforts. Include any projects fully or partially funded with public funds.
- Publicize reports to local and regional realtors, brokers, and developers. Post the report card on the Downtown Wichita Falls Development, Inc. Web site with links from the City of Wichita Falls' website and BCI's website.

Elements of Successful Media & PR Campaigns

- Have clear and measurable goals
- Have extensive knowledge of your audience
- Develop compelling messages that connect with your target audience
- Specify what actions you want people to take, how to do it, and why
- Make the case for why action is needed now
- Match strategies to your target audience
- Research, plan, and pre-test
- Budget
- Evaluate, revise, and refocus on an ongoing basis



APPENDIX



Financing Strategies

Unlike the federally financed urban renewal projects of the 1960s and 70s, today's downtown revitalization efforts are much more likely to be financed with private funds or through innovative public-private partnerships. As a result, the creation of some form of taxing or special assessment district is a commonly used approach for financing and managing downtown development. Below is a list of the different types of financing districts that are commonly used in Texas.

- *Tax-increment financing (TIF) districts.* Tax increment financing districts, which allow taxing entities to repay the costs of improvements to a designated area with the future tax revenues generated by increasing property values, are among the most popular funding mechanisms.¹ These districts can be structured as a single, large tax-increment district (San Diego) or as a series of smaller tax-increment districts in targeted areas (Chicago).
- *Public improvement districts (PID).* PIDs, also known as Business Improvement Districts, offer cities a means for improving their infrastructure to promote economic growth in an area. The Public Improvement District Assessment Act allows cities to levy and collect special assessments on properties that are within the city or its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

PIDs may be formed to create water, wastewater, health and sanitation, or drainage improvements; street and sidewalk improvements; mass transit improvements; parking improvements; library improvements; park, recreation and cultural improvements; landscaping and other aesthetic improvements; art installation; creation of pedestrian malls or similar improvements; supplemental safety services for the improvement of the district, including public safety and security services; or

supplemental business-related services for the improvement of the district, including advertising and business recruitment and development.

- *Municipal management districts.* These districts, also called downtown management districts, are created within an existing commercial area to finance facilities, infrastructure and services beyond those already provided by individual property owners or the municipality. The improvements may be paid for by self-imposed property taxes, special assessments and impact fees, or by other charges against district property owners. The creation of the district does not relieve a city from providing basic services to the area. A district is created to supplement, not supplant, the municipal services available to the area.
- *Municipal development districts.* A municipality may create a Municipal Development District comprising all or part of its city limits, all or part of its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), or any combination of all or part of these areas. To create a district, a city must call an election through an order that defines the proposed boundaries of the district. These districts are financed through an additional sales tax approved by the city's voters, a tax which is similar to the economic development sales tax.
- *Special purpose district.* Another approach to downtown finance is the creation of a special purpose district. Unlike the TIF district, which collects the tax increment created by rising property values, a special purpose district represents an additional tax. Special purpose districts are legally recognized governments and operate independently from other taxing jurisdictions, such as a city or county. They can collect money from a variety of sources, including bond issues, user fees and grants, and are typically governed by a board.

The table on the next page compares the districts based on the funding source, who bears the burden of financing the district, how the funds can be used, and who initiates the creation of the district. In addition, examples of each type of district are provided.

¹ As described in the Texas Attorney General's Office Handbook on Economic Development Laws for Texas Cities: "Each taxing unit can choose to dedicate all, a portion of, or none of the tax revenue that is attributable to the increase in property values due to the improvements within the reinvestment zone. The additional tax revenue that is received from the affected properties is referred to as the tax increment. Each taxing unit determines what percentage of its tax increment, if any, it will commit to repayment of the "cost of financing the public improvements."



Comparison of Financing Districts

Mechanism	Funding Source	Burden	Uses	Initiation	Examples
Tax Increment Financing	Allocation of incremental property tax revenues to the TIF	Property owners in district	Structural and infrastructure improvements	Petition of property owners in district or city council	Rowlett, TX Arlington, TX Houston, TX
Public Improvement District	Additional assessment	Property owners in district	Improvements of water, wastewater, health & sanitation, drainage, street & sidewalk, mass transit, parking, library, park, recreation & cultural facilities, landscaping & other aesthetics, art installation, creation of pedestrian malls, supplemental safety services, supplemental business-related services	City council or by petition of 50% or more of property owners in a given geographic area	Houston, TX Greensboro, NC Great Fall, MT Durango, CO
Municipal Management Districts	Self-imposed property taxes, special assessments, and impact fees	Property owners in district	Facilities, infrastructure, and services beyond those provided by property owners or by the municipality	Petition of 50% or more of property owners in a given geographic area	Houston, TX
Municipal Development Districts	Sales tax	Consumers in the district	Any project acceptable as a use of 4B sales tax revenues	Election	Aransas Pass, TX
Special Purpose District	Additional tax	Patrons / users of district	Depends on structure of SPD	Legislative action	The Woodlands, TX



In addition to using financing districts, economic development may be funded by a variety of other mechanisms. Examples and descriptions are listed below.

- *Bond issue for economic development.* As a home rule city, Wichita Falls' statutory ability to issue bonds for specific purposes must be outlined in its charter. Provided statutory authority exists, cities can issue bonds for economic development purposes, including bonds for certain commercial projects, provided that the building or facility will be leased to a private entity or to another political subdivision or the state. Economic development corporations also have the authority to issue bonds, payable solely from economic development sales tax proceeds.
- *Economic development sales tax.* The Development Corporation Act allows Section 4B tax proceeds to be used for a variety of business development purposes, including the promotion of manufacturing and industrial facilities, and facilities and infrastructure related to such projects. In addition, 4B funds can be used for projects that are not specifically related to job creation, including parks and related public space improvements, commercial facilities, and tourism and entertainment facilities.
- *Venue project tax.* Cities and counties may choose to propose a venue project tax if they are interested in diversifying the sources of revenue they have to promote a specific economic development project. The venue project revenue sources that can be adopted include a sales tax, a hotel occupancy tax, a short-term motor vehicle rental tax, an event parking tax, an event admissions tax and a venue facility use tax. Additionally, the venue sales tax can be proposed in certain limited cases even if the city is already at its maximum sales tax rate; in this circumstance, the legislation allows the voters to approve an automatic reduction of another existing sales tax to make room for the venue tax.
- *Local hotel occupancy tax.* The local hotel occupancy tax can provide an important source of funding for maintenance of a city's tourism program and can translate into economic development for the entire area. Both general law cities and home rule cities are authorized to adopt a hotel occupancy tax within the city boundaries. Unlike a local sales tax, the adoption of a local hotel occupancy tax does not require voter approval. Most cities are eligible to adopt a hotel occupancy tax rate of up to

seven percent of the consideration paid for the use of a hotel room. Local hotel occupancy tax revenues may only be spent to establish or enhance a convention center, cover the administrative expenses for registering convention delegates, pay for tourism-related advertising and promotions, fund programs that enhance the arts that will enhance tourism and hotel activity, pay for historic restoration or preservation projects that will enhance tourism and hotel activity, fund sporting events in which the majority of participants are tourists in cities located within a county with a population of one million or less, or enhance and upgrade certain cities' existing sports facilities or fields.

- *Matching funds/loans.* State and federal matching funds are often available for projects that meet specific criteria. For example, local funds for highway beautification and transportation demand management projects can often be highly leveraged with federal funds, such as those available under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21 Century, commonly known as TEA 21. Loan programs, such as the Texas Leverage Fund administered by the Texas Department of Economic Development, are another potential funding method.
- *Other funding strategies.* Downtown revitalization efforts can be funded by a wide range of non-tax mechanisms. One common approach is the creation of a merchants association funded by member dues and/or service fees (fees for the provision of services such as parking management, promotion, or design assistance). Other sources of funds include corporate donations or sponsorships, hotel-motel tax, product sales (T-shirts, bumper stickers, calendars, etc.) and special events (such as auctions, garage sales, farmers markets).

The Main Street program lists the following formula for an "ideal" funding strategy: 1/3 city funding; 1/3 downtown business and property owners; and 1/3 other contributors, including major businesses and industries in the community, citizens, etc. (Organizing a Successful Downtown Revitalization Program Using the Main Street Approach, Washington State Office of Trade & Development).

Aside from funding improvements in an area, cities and economic development organizations are offering incentives to encourage private investment in their downtown districts.



Various types of districts may be created to provide benefits to businesses or property owners in specific districts. In addition, other types of incentives may be offered to encourage the desired investment. Examples of districts and incentives are listed below.

- *Neighborhood empowerment zone.* A Neighborhood Empowerment Zone is a designated area within a municipality that is created to promote one or more of the following: affordable housing, an increase in economic development; an increase in the quality of social services, education or public safety; or the rehabilitation of affordable housing in the zone. In this zone, a municipality may waive impact fees, refund municipal sales taxes, and abate property taxes for the purposes of benefiting the zone.
- *Enterprise zone.* Enterprise zones are economically distressed areas designated as such by the State of Texas. Communities may nominate projects to participate in the Texas Enterprise Zone Program. This program is an economic development tool for local communities to partner with the State of Texas to promote job creation and capital investment in Enterprise Zones. For qualifying projects, the Comptroller's office administers Enterprise Zone refunds of state sales and use tax.
- *Reinvestment zone.* A taxing unit may designate a reinvestment zone if an area meets one of the criteria listed in Chapter 312 of the Texas Tax Code. The criteria



most often cited is that the designation of the zone is reasonably likely to contribute to the retention or expansion of primary employment or attract major investment to the zone. Projects in the designated zone are eligible for tax abatement agreements and economic development refunds.

- *Defense economic readjustment zone.* A community may be nominated as a defense economic readjustment zone for a period of seven years if it can demonstrate that it is adversely affected and defense dependent. Once designated, a community may nominate two projects to be defense economic readjustment projects that are eligible to apply for franchise tax credits and state sales and use tax refunds on qualified expenditures. Local communities may also offer benefits to participants under the defense economic readjustment zone program as well. These may include tax abatement, tax increment financing, one-stop permitting and others.
- *Tax abatement agreements.* A tax abatement is an agreement between a taxpayer and a taxing unit that exempts all or part of the increase in the value of the real property and/or tangible personal property for a period not to exceed 10 years. Each taxing unit that wants to consider tax abatement proposals must adopt guidelines and criteria for the creation of a reinvestment zone and must hold a public hearing. After these steps are complete, the taxing unit may designate a zone.
- *Economic development refund.* Property owners that have established a new business in a reinvestment zone or expanded or modernized an existing business located in the zone may apply for a refund of sales and use tax equal to the school property taxes paid by the owner in that tax year. Since entering into a city or county abatement agreement, the property owner must have increased the businesses' payroll by at least \$3 million or increased the abated property's appraised value by at least \$4 million. The total for all refunds collectively may not exceed \$10 million.
- *4A / 4B sales and use funds.* City voters may approve 4A and 4B taxes, which are special designated taxes, to be used for economic development purposes. 4A tax funds can be used to fund the provision of land, buildings, equipment, facilities, expenditures, targeted infrastructure and improvements that are for the creation or retention of primary jobs. 4B tax funds may fund the same types of projects as 4A and also projects that are typically considered to be community development initia-



tives.

- *Chapter 380 agreement.* A city may establish and provide for the administration of one or more programs, including programs for making loans and grants of public money and providing personnel and services of the municipality, to promote state or local economic development and to stimulate business and commercial activity in the municipality. Funding from these programs is allocated from the city's general fund and has fewer restrictions than most of the other types of incentives. Many cities structure their Chapter 380 agreements to function as sales tax rebates to companies.



Public Meetings and Presentations

A series of public meetings and city council presentations were conducted. The meetings were well attended and the team received a tremendous amount of information and input that helped shape the final plan.

These meetings gave stakeholders the opportunity to present their collective vision and discuss in detail the issues in downtown Wichita Falls. The following meetings and council presentations were held:

August 14, 2007 - Mayor's Steering Committee Kick-off Meeting

Freese and Nichols and TIP Strategies met with the mayor's steering committee to give an overview of the project schedule and answer questions.

September 5, 2007 - Downtown Plan Public Kick-off Meeting

This was the first public meeting held where the public was informed that the City hired Freese and Nichols, Inc. to create a plan for the downtown area. FNI made a presentation on the planning process and allowed citizens to give their input of what was good and what needed improvement in downtown. About 50 people were in attendance for this afternoon meeting.



October 9, 2007 - Downtown Wichita Falls Development, Inc. Meeting

DWFD, Inc. helps to create a sense of place for citizens, businesses, and visitors. DWFD, Inc. was a big supporter of the downtown plan and kept its members informed about the planning process. Cynthia Laney, executive director, organized a meeting for DWFD members at the Kemp Center where Freese and Nichols presented their downtown presentation and received input on the existing conditions of downtown. Close to 50 DWFD members were present.

October 10, 2007 - City Planning Commission Downtown Plan Presentation

Freese and Nichols' presentation to the City Planning Commission outlined public comments about downtown's biggest challenges and opportunities. Other public comments received at the public meetings that were presented included: pedestrian walkways, lighting, security, housing, traffic/access, parking, themes and/or districts, gateway, plaza/ open space, vacant/underutilized buildings, and business types needed.

November 12, 2007 - Downtown Wichita Falls Public Meeting

TIP Strategies, Inc. led this meeting where close to 100 citizens were in attendance. The attendees were divided into three groups in which they had an opportunity to give input on Wichita Falls' economic development, downtown, and Sheppard AFB. The mayor made it known that the master plans the City would receive from the consultants would also be action plans as well.





January 23, 2008 - City Council Workshop

At the beginning of the year the City Council held a workshop for council members to discuss upcoming activities for the City and its budget. A short presentation was given to the council to update them on the defense diversification plan, downtown plan, and local update. Visions/goals, opportunities, strategies and priority projects, and next steps were discussed in this presentation.

February 15, 2008 - Downtown Wichita Falls Development, Inc. Luncheon

Andrew Taft, president of Downtown Fort Worth, Inc., gave a presentation at the Wichita Club in downtown Wichita Falls titled "The Thirty Year Overnight Success of Downtown Fort Worth." Taft talked about the evolution of the Fort Worth downtown in connection with the nonprofit organization, Downtown Fort Worth, Inc. The model for Wichita Falls, Taft explained, will be to identify its strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, and create a strategic action plan to address those issues. Over 100 people attended this informative and exciting presentation.



April 22, 2008 - Final Downtown Plan Presentation to City Council and Community

At the end of the downtown planning process, Freese and Nichols presented their final recommendations that would help revitalize downtown Wichita Falls. The presentation was well received and it generated even more excitement as stakeholders now had tangible goals they could strive to implement. The presentation addressed areas in urban design, business and residential development, transportation, and economic development. There were over 100 people in attendance that consisted of city staff, DWFD, Inc. members, property owners, stakeholders, and citizens.

"The BPW Page is a publication of the Business & Professional Women's Association that is responsible for its content."



Women Helping Women

Downtown's development is important to everyone!

By Martha Hall
Editor - BPW Page

Recently, it was my privilege to attend a very informative meeting featuring Andy Taft, executive director of Downtown Fort Worth, Inc. as the guest speaker. He presented a video and narrative titled "The 30-Year Overnight Success of Downtown Fort Worth". It was fascinating to see pictures of downtown Fort Worth with boarded up windows and grass growing through cracks in the sidewalks versus what you see now! If you haven't been to downtown Fort Worth, it is certainly worth a visit - Bass Hall, coffee at Barnes and Noble, shops and restaurants all with police officers on horse back and bicycles. You can walk out of a concert at 11:00 at night and be safe. Of course you are in the company of thousands of people enjoying the walk around Sundance Square!



Martha Hall

This presentation made me think about downtown Wichita Falls. I love downtown, and it is easy for me to visualize what it could be. It will never be what it was when I moved here in 1961 as THE city of Wichita Falls, but it could certainly be a place you would come and bring your family to eat at neat restaurants, go to good theater and shop at niche stores. In fact, what would it take? We are already farther along in our development than Fort Worth was when it began. We have a few restaurants, theaters and a few shops. Perhaps the most important thing we already have are condominiums! People live in downtown Wichita Falls at the Holt Hotel and LaSalle Crossing as examples. Any future development will use this to build upon as we look to the future.

Cynthia Laney is the Executive Director of Downtown Wichita Falls Development, Inc. If you haven't met her, you should. Her enthusiasm for what she does is infectious. She hasn't been in Wichita Falls a long time, but you sure wouldn't know it by talking with her. She came to Wichita Falls from Seymour with a stop along the way in the city of Pittsburgh, Texas. Her training includes the Main Street Management Program with the Texas Historical Commission and is a graduate of the Economic Development Institute. She and I sat down at lunch last week to talk about her vision and what she wants to do to make it happen.

The first question to her was, "What is your vision for downtown?" She quickly said, "For people to realize the opportunities and possibilities of downtown and to love it. We have the bones and basic infrastructure now to build on, and with a comprehensive plan in place, we can give the vision validity."

She said she once saw a sign in a vacant building somewhere that said "This building is not vacant, it is full of opportunities." When she said this, I mentally



The Wichita Theater hosts many plays and brings many residents and visitors to downtown Wichita Falls.

pictured several buildings that not only hold opportunities, but memories. Too often, people are quick to tear down the old and replace with shiny, glittery new buildings that literally have no substance.

Downtown is the heart of our city. So many have moved out of the downtown area but Cynthia believes everything should be centered where the energy is. To do this will take commitment from citizens: those who take the risks to develop their passion and those who will come. I love the line from the movie, *Field of Dreams*, "build it and they will come."

Part of the vision will be to help the community recognize downtown as the center of this community. The closest some people have been to this center

of energy are Holiday or Broad streets going to or from someplace. Things will need to happen to bring people east of these two streets and this is beginning to happen. Festivals like City Lights, St. Patrick's Day festivities and other planned events bring families to celebrate, to eat and to shop.

Wichita Theater and Backdoor Theater are true diamonds in our midst. Wichita Falls is full of talent and these two venues help showcase it with musicals and dramas of all kinds. Let's not forget the Kemp!

With a wide variety of involvement from the city of Wichita Falls, Wichita County, a consulting firm and many individuals who have a dream, a future plan will be put into place. Hopefully, it will be sooner rather than later.

Once a definitive plan is in place, then the financial incentives and structures will come. A couple of years ago I was listening to a radio show that featured then Dallas mayor, Laura Miller. She made the statement that downtown Dallas would look as good as Fort Worth if only they had the Bass family! There is no doubt this family has been incredible for Fort Worth's revitalization, but this family was not the only source available to help Fort Worth become what it is today. We don't have the Bass family either, but there are other means out there, and we will find them if we have the determination to follow through with a comprehensive plan.

Downtown revitalization will help us all. It will help in economic development by showing prospective industries we care about our city and we will care about them if they locate their business here. It will help local owners when others join them in a common goal of working together by using Tax Increment Funding (TIF) and even at some future time, the development of Public Infrastructure Districts (PID) which would have busi-

nesses join together financially to enhance services within their district. One example might be to pay someone to come in the middle of the night to pick up trash and wash down the streets and sidewalks! Sound unbelievable? It's not, it is being done in other places right now!

There is no one who says this will be easy. Wichitans have a problem selling this city to themselves, much less to anyone else. There is so much going for us, we just need to stop and realize it, pull up our sleeves and ask how we can help, then get busy getting it done. It can start with Ohio, Indiana and Scott streets and move outward to MPEC, Berend's Landing and even a muddy river that has a beautiful waterfalls that might someday lead to something quite dramatic. Dreams don't cost anything, but dreams do lead to what can be accomplished if you want something badly enough.

When Cynthia and I finished our talk together, she said, "so many exciting things are happening, come see!" Think about it.

Teens' abusive relationships take many forms

By Lindsay Chandler
President, NIKE Club

Many teens today are in an abusive relationship. Most think that to be in an abusive relation-

ship is to be in an abusive relationship. This can include telling them they would be nothing without you and that they are worthless.

Some even physically abuse



Times Record News

TimesRecordNews.com
- Vol. 100, No. 276 - Serving Wichita Falls for nearly a century - 50c

Extreme makeover: Wichita Falls

City officials may approve funding for downtown revitalization

Carmen Castro
Times Record News

The first way to give the heart of downtown a much-needed face-lift is in the works. City officials are expected to approve \$100,000 to partly fund a consulting firm to cre-

ate a revitalization plan to further revitalize downtown. "We're looking to improve from stage development to economic development," said Wichita Falls Community Development Director David Clark. "The question is what do we want mostly?"

Clark said it is important to look at all possibilities with a consultant in order to identify a plan to make sure all downtown buildings are used to their full potential. "Anything can be a possibility," Clark said. One of the side projects in the downtown development is

the possible construction of a new city hall building. Wichita County Judge Woody Gossett said the talk of maintaining city and county facilities is too premature to consider until the Multi-Purpose Texas Center's funds are paid off in about three years.

"We do know that both the citizens will stay downtown and are looking at renovations," Gossett said. But talk of a new city hall is just as preliminary as the future of the run-down farmers market. Please see PLANS on Page 6A

WWS

Times Record News

PLANS continued from Page 1A

at Eight and Ohio Street. Clark and Jim Pettyjohn, with the Museum of North Texas History, recently toured the market to see if it can be the future location for displays of some of the city's artifacts.

"At this time, circumstances as well as the consultants will review if that's the best way to use the building," Clark said.

Building codes and other infrastructure details are what will affect the final say on the downtown revitalization project, Clark said. One of the downtown beautification projects set in stone awaits approval Tuesday.

The Tax Increment Financing board has recommended that the City Council allocate \$25,000 from the TIF fund to help with the renovation of the Casa Montana restaurant on Eighth Street.

Casa Montana co-owner Vickie Karr said she and her husband are excited to see the city's commitment to downtown.

"We're thrilled to be able to have the opportunity to help this place look as it did 60 years ago when we first

opened," Karr said. The restaurant owner said since the Holt Hotel renovations are completed, the couple felt the need to catch up with times and help attract more people to the area.

The Karrs' building renovations are expected to cost \$183,764, which includes a new kitchen facility, ductwork as well as facade rehabilitation and signage improvements. The owners also plan to reopen the shoe shine parlor next door.

The city would reimburse the owner when the project is complete.

Downtown Wichita Falls Development Inc. Executive Director Cynthia Laney said a consultant will help give everyone a better direction on urban business development.

"It will all really help bring attention to downtown," Laney said. "There's already a lot of downtown traffic, a lot of downtown residents and hopefully a lot of business clients around the hotels to start to show that downtown is alive."

Laney said she is eager to have a consultant's expertise so that planned projects can go into effect, like the relocation of the Museum of North Texas History to the heart of downtown. There has also been talk about the Wichita Theater bringing in a children's museum, Laney said.

"This could help for cultural enrichment trips for people looking for a single day trip, like for folks out in the Dallas-Fort Worth area," Laney said. "In the end, it's all to help educate on the history of Wichita Falls and bring pride especially when we are all working together."

Clark said the downtown face-lift money request is just one of three financing elements to secure a consultant for the city.

The city has another \$60,000 budgeted to help fund the consultant, and there is a \$100,000 grant filed with the Office of Economic Adjustment at the Department of Defense.

"We're trying to pursue further economic development for the entire city," Clark said. "To see if there's a way to become less dependent on the base (Sheppard Air Force Base). It will all be inclusive."



Downtown Business and Building Survey Form

DOWNTOWN WICHITA FALLS DEVELOPMENT, INC.
BUILDING AND BUSINESS SURVEY FORM

<u>BUILDING:</u>	<u>BUSINESS:</u>
Street Address _____	Business Name _____
Building Name _____	Owner/Manager's Address _____
Building Owner _____	Phone No. _____
Owner's Address _____	Business Type _____
Phone No. _____	No. of Employees _____
Total Sq. Ft. _____	Downtown Assoc. Member? _____
Occupied ____ Vacant ____	Number of Office Spaces _____
Date Built _____	Spaces Occupied _____
Date of Alterations _____	Price per Square Foot _____
Architectural Description (exterior and interior) _____	

Condition _____	

Brief History Including Location of Historic Photographs _____	

Owner and/or Manager Goals for the Business and the Building _____	

Date(s) of Meetings _____	
Survey Completed by _____	
Date _____	



LOCAL UPDATE





Parks and Recreation

Overview

As part of the local update plan, the consulting team conducted a review of the park system. This is an overall general review of Wichita Falls Parks system with comment and recommendation for new recreation opportunities in the City and at Lake Wichita. This process also includes a general review of the present Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan 2001-2011. The findings and recommendations of this work were presented to the Mayor, City Council, Park Board and Mayor's Steering Committee.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan

The purpose of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan is to provide a comprehensive planning document related to parks, recreation and open space in Wichita Falls. The Plan identifies recreation needs within the community and provides for the orderly and financially responsible acquisition of park land, open space and the development or renovation of recreation facilities.

The Park Master Plan is a fluid document and should be able to adapt and change with recreation trends, land uses, demographics and the economy at any given time frame of the Plan. The existing Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan 2001-2011 is a comprehensive and well prepared master plan. The plan addresses all of the items required for a complete planning document.

The identification of existing recreation facilities, park land classification, needs assessment and identification of future park needs were identified and addressed in the Plan. The Plan was adopted by Ordinance Number 54-2001 on June 5, 2001. The Plan should be reviewed by staff annually and revised every five (5) years. Changes which could impact the park system may include additional park land acquisition, new park development and park renovation.

The Wichita Falls Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan should be updated at this time and be adopted by a new ordinance. It has been seven years since the plan was prepared. The existing plan should review and update the following:

- Demographic changes and growth areas within the City.

- Document changes in the park system since 2001. This should include park land and recreation inventories.
- Review goals and objectives set forth in the Plan. Reaffirm the existing goals and objectives, remove accomplished goals and objectives and determine whether new goals are needed based on the needs assessment phase of the Plan.
- Prepare a new needs assessment using the standard, resource and demand based approach. It is recommended the City add a series of three town hall meetings to gather public input and comments to understand the recreational needs from Wichita Falls citizens.
- Create a park land acquisition map and future park plan that illustrates where new parks and open space should be acquired based on growth and development within Wichita Falls.
- Based on public input and the needs assessment phase, develop a new priority list for park land and recreation facility development for the next five years.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

In 2006, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department revised the criteria for the park master plan approval process of Texas Cities. Once the master plan has been completed, the City should submit the master plan to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for their file.

Special Meeting of the City Council, Mayor's Steering Committee and Park Board

On March 11, 2008, a special meeting was held to review and discuss the findings of the parks and recreation system in Wichita Falls. The topics for discussion were as follows:

- Review of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan 2001-2011
- Review of Wichita Falls Parks System
- State of Municipal Park Planning and Facilities
- Questions, Comments and Open Discussion



Wichita Falls Park System

- Landscape Medians

General observations were noted and discussed regarding the Wichita Falls Park System. The park department is responsible for the landscape design and maintenance of the medians and thoroughfare intersections throughout the City. It was noted these medians are well designed and maintained, and because of this effort they rank as some of the best examples in the State. These landscape features add to the visual quality of life for citizens and visitors alike.

- Lucy Park and Prairie Dog Town

Lucy Park is a unique park in Wichita Falls and would be in any municipal park system. The Wichita Rivers, in conjunction with the open space trail system, duck pond and other park amenities, make Lucy Park the cornerstone of the Wichita Falls Park System. Although a few west Texas cities may have a prairie dog town, this wildlife opportunity provides a unique opportunity for visitors to view the prairie dog in a native setting.

- Hike and Bike Trail

The City's strongest asset is the on-going development of its hike and bike trail system. Trails are the most utilized recreational element within a municipal park system. Trails accommodate all age groups and enable a variety of uses such as: biking, walking, and jogging and are used from dawn to dusk. The City is continuing to pursue the trail development to provide a continual loop throughout the City.

State of Municipal Park Planning and Facilities

The Consultant team prepared a list of recreational elements which other Texas cities are developing in order to provide recreational opportunities. The following list of discussion items were presented to members attending the special meeting.

- Water Parks and Splash Pads

The City currently does not own or operate a water park or splash pad. The City operates a pool in Lucy Park. Water Parks are typically large water-oriented play parks with slides and water play equipment. Most often a City will build a water park to provide recreational opportunities to all citizens for an economical entrance fee.

Water parks built on a large scale have a regional service area. Construction costs for these facilities can range from \$2,000,000.00 to \$10,000,000.00.

Splash pads are water play elements which can be installed in a large neighborhood park or community park. Water play apparatus provides water from the concrete pad surface spraying upward and in some cases water play equipment is installed. The pads do not hold water; therefore there is no need for life guards. Splash pads provide recreation opportunities to children generally under the age of twelve. They are economic to build and provide alternate play opportunities during summer months. Construction cost can range between \$150,000.00 to \$400,000.00.

- Dog Parks

Many municipalities are building dog parks to accommodate citizens and their pets. These parks are most successful in high density areas with limited or no space for dogs. The parks require between five to ten acres of space. Typically, the parks are divided into large dog sections and small dog sections. The parks also provide social interaction between pet owners. Cost varies on these facilities because of size and support facilities.

- Skateboard Parks

Cities are building skateboard parks in their park system to provide a place for skateboarders to gather. The City is currently building a skateboard facility to address this need.

- Open Space Acquisition

The City should evaluate undeveloped areas for open space acquisition. As mentioned in the existing Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan the City may need to acquire additional land as the City continues to develop in a westerly direction. The critical issue regarding open space is to acquire it before development or platting occurs. Once land is developed the opportunity to acquire the land is virtually gone. The City is fortunate to have the floodplains and open space of the Wichita River and Lake Wichita.



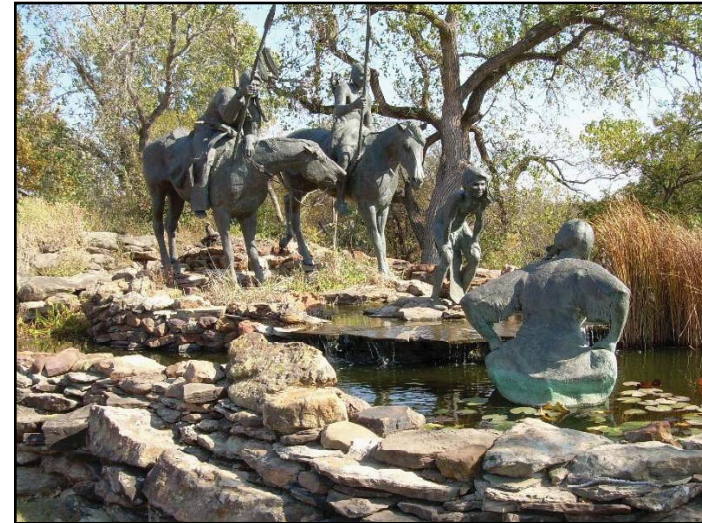
Development of Lake Wichita

The Consultant team was asked to evaluate Lake Wichita and explore the various recreational opportunities which the lake may provide. Several concepts were discussed at the special meeting including an amphitheater site which would serve as a regional attraction. The concept would have included a facility which would seat approximately 3,000 to 4,000 people.

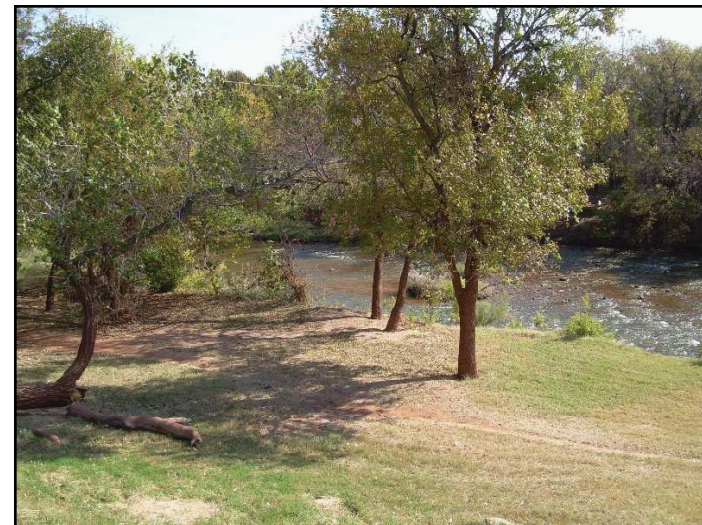
Developing the shoreline and expanding Lake Wichita Park into a historic settlement park was also discussed; settlements of a specific time period would be recreated for viewing and interactive purposes.

Sections of Lake Wichita could be converted to create a water fowl nature preserve and bird sanctuary. Creation of these wetlands would introduce flora and fauna species to provide passive, interactive and recreational opportunities to citizens of Wichita Falls and the possibility to serve as a regional nature facility. The development of this would also work in conjunction with River Bend Nature Center. Combining these two environmental attractions could increase potential visitor and tourism to the City of Wichita Falls.

A concept plan illustrating the potential use of Lake Wichita is depicted on the following page.



Existing Wichita River sculptures



Wichita River - Wichita Falls, TX



The Gateway to Texas
Wichita Falls
TEXAS

Lake Wichita

Nature Preserve & Wetlands

City of Wichita Falls

Prepared by:
DUNKIN
SIMS
STOFFELS
INC.

LEGEND

	observation deck / bridge
	park shelter
	neighborhood connection
	bike & hike trail
	nature trail
	viewing docks
	existing park connection
	picnic areas





ZONING



Zoning

Purpose

The local update plan also investigated the zoning policies for North Kemp, between Kell (U.S. Rt. 82) and Seymour Highway (Business 277), Kell between U.S. 287 and McNiel, and the Wichita River corridor. The goal of this corridor analysis is to help improve the appearance and image of Wichita Falls along the key major corridors mentioned above.

Corridor Analysis

North Kemp between Kell Freeway and Seymour Highway (Business 277)

This corridor is presently zoned mostly limited and general commercial. Originally the frontage was primarily single family homes, but now this corridor is transforming to commercial, office, and retail uses. There are a few vacant lots that exist within this corridor. Recommendations for this corridor include:

- Consider ground signs and landscaping similar to the Brook Avenue District
- Maximum one story height (now 35 feet).
- Develop an overlay district that focuses more on design.
- Possibly require "Spanish Mediterranean" or other suitable architectural theme.
- At a minimum, design guidelines should be developed to depict brick façade, articulation and roof design.
- Part of Kemp is divided with median trees on the southern portion. This strategy should be considered in a similar fashion on the north side.
- Enhance the north side entry.



Appropriate scale and design example.

Kell Boulevard between Kemp and Brook Avenue

Kell is located on the old railroad right-of-way; it has many "triangular" parcels/lots which were created as a result. Recommendations for this corridor include:

- The south side of Kell, which is mostly developed, should generally remain as is and preserve present development character.
- The north side of Kell should develop a special "prototype" office site plan to assist in developing office space.
- Triangular lots are too small to develop, and should be converted to landscaped areas.
- Develop small-scale guidelines for office and retail buildings.



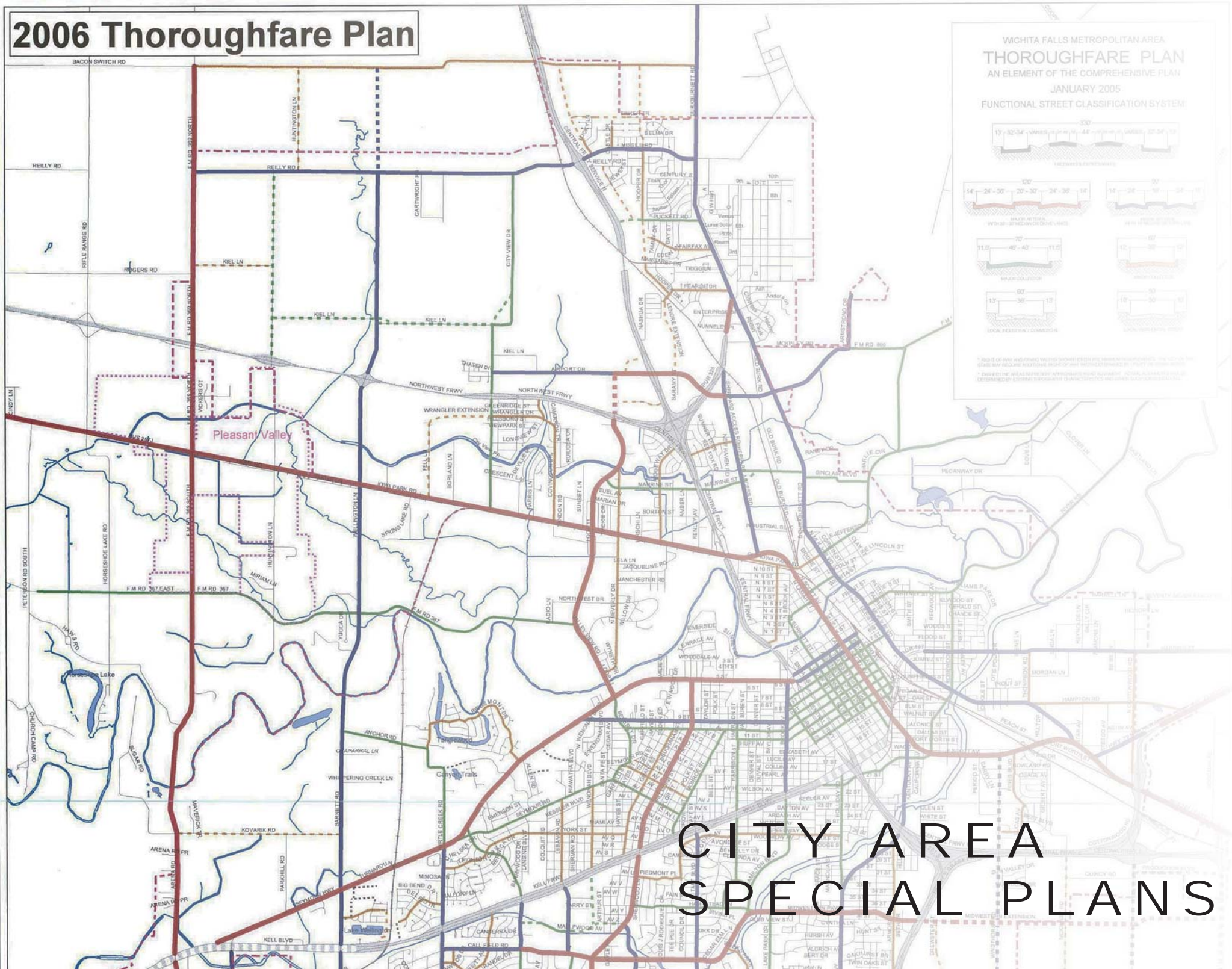
Appropriate development style example

Wichita River Corridor

This corridor is located between 1st Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. The River Development District (RDD) currently exist and the concept for this corridor should continue. Other recommendations for the Wichita River corridor include:

- Develop incentives to encourage another hotel that focuses on the river.
- Develop the trail on the north side which currently limited to the south side.
- Develop stronger connectivity and access standards.
- Develop more signage for bikes/pedestrians.
- Formalize connections to the Convention Center (MPEC).
- Improve advertisement of the Wee-Chi-Tah sculptures. Carry this same theme along other areas of the River.

2006 Thoroughfare Plan





City Special Area Plans

In the recent years, Wichita Falls has made an effort to make sure that they're planning for the future. Below are previous plans and documents that have addressed transportation, parks and recreation, planning, and engineering in the city. These plans and documents can also be used in coordination with this plan for guidance in the City of Wichita Falls regarding future growth and development.

Transportation Planning Documents

Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2005 - 2030

Prepared by Lockwood, Andrews and Newnam (LAN)

Adopted by: Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) January 20, 2005

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a comprehensive, multimodal "blueprint" for transportation systems and services aimed at meeting the mobility needs of the Wichita Falls Metropolitan Area through the next 25 years. The Plan includes detailed research covering vehicular/roadway, transit and bicycle/pedestrian related forms of transportation. Plans, projects, programs, and policies are proposed as transportation recommendations that reflect solutions to improve the overall quality of life for residents in the Wichita Falls area. The Plan provides a comprehensive overview of the MPO area (history, demographics, climate and communities) and its regional setting, specific goals and objectives along with transportation issues relating to maintenance, movement of goods and people, safety, environmental concerns, congestion management, a financial overview regarding funding availability and options to pursue ranked transportation projects in addition to performance measures. For additional information or to review the Metropolitan Transportation Plan in its entirety, consult the City's website (www.cwftx.net) or contact the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

Bicycle Master Plan 2005-2030

Prepared by Lockwood, Andrews and Newnam, Inc. (LAN) and Knudson & Assoc.

Adopted by: Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) January 20, 2005

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan developed a Bicycle Master Plan to address options for alternative transportation, recreational development along with supporting the annual Hotter'n Hell Hundred community event – the largest sanctioned non-competitive cycling ride in the United States. The Plan is composed of seven sections that address facility inventory, best practices, bicycle facility design guidelines, wayfinding strategies, education/

encouragement and enforcement, conclusions and recommendations and a reference component that outlines resources and safety information.

The Plan recognizes that as Wichita Falls' population increases and generates more traffic conditions for cyclists, the system will continue to deteriorate. Through developing a 25-year, long-range Bicycle Master Plan it will help ensure as growth continues roadways will also continue to be friendly to bicyclists. The Bicycle Plan is phased and its mission is two-fold: 1) to visibly increase use and 2) diversify the current use of the Wichita Falls bicycle system. The defining objective of the Bicycle Master Plan is getting people to view bicycling as more than an economic engine and a recreational or leisure experience.

Wichita Falls has become a successful example of using bicycling as a way to provide leisure opportunities and stir economic development. The Plan's vision holds firm to this philosophy, but also considers other influences. For example, the Plan could evolve bicycling into a plausible form of personal transportation through an expanded network of route types. These would support the current economic elements of bicycling in Wichita Falls.

Long-Range Plan Objectives and Goals:

- A Wichita Falls MPO Bicycle Network – organize a bicycle route network that meets the needs of multiple users and enables efficient cross-town and cross-MPO travel.
- Support Features – provide bicyclists with the amenities that encourage use; improve connectivity and eliminate gaps in the existing trail system.
- Intermodal Integration – create a seamless network of bicycle and other types of public transportation.
- Outreach – establish a public education program that reaches a wide spectrum of



Hotter'n Hell - Wichita Falls, TX



real and potential users and focuses on safety and benefits of bicycling.

- Financial Planning – stimulate partnerships and locate funding sources that enable network development
- Ongoing Expansion – start on a development program that will steadily expand the network and provide for evolving and emerging needs in a proactive manner

Overall benefits of maintaining a Bicycle Master Plan for residents of Wichita Falls include improved quality of life, reduced congestion, environmental improvements, economic conservation through less auto dependency and improved health of residents.

Final conclusions and recommendations:

- Proceeding with implementing a bicycle plan;
- the MPO and City should proceed to complete the existing trail around the City and, when possible it should accelerate completion;
- the trail link from Hamilton Park to Lake Wichita is the most heavily used section the MPO and City should hasten completion around Wichita Falls Country Club by either creating a route to detour the country club or securing the land through the country club;
- Establish an advocacy committee that can develop an implementation plan for a bicycle network and promote use;
- MPO and City staff should begin defining routes that can be designated as links in its bicycle network. Initial routes should provide cross-town movement at least north-south and possibly east-west with subsequent routes connecting to these spines;
- Signage needs to be developed for maximum use and to unify the existing trail and future network, promote participation, improve safety and security;
- Consider taking steps to provide safe, efficient, and secure end-of-route facilities such as bicycle parking and storage, and, where possible, drinking fountains, change rooms and showers;
- Beginning an active program that teaches bicyclists and motorists how to safely handle each other's legal rights to share the road;
- Looking to other successful examples in finding innovative ways to encourage

increased use of the trail and bicycle network;

- Ensuring law enforcement is impartial and universally applied and there should be innovation ways to involve community and policing in the bicycle network

For additional information or to review the Bicycle Master Plan in its entirety it is available on the City's website (www.cwftx.net) or by contacting the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

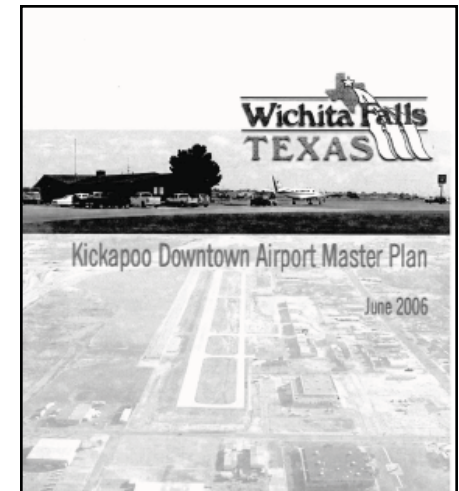
Kickapoo Downtown Airport Master Plan

Prepared by: URS; Leslie Sagar & Associates, LLC; Leibowitz & Horton AMC

Adopted by: City Council – August 15, 2006 (Resolution 106-2006)

The Kickapoo Downtown Airport Master Plan Study was prepared by URS in association with Leslie Sagar & Associates, LLC and Leibowitz & Horton AMC in 2006. The Airpark Master Plan provides a long-range, comprehensive overview for future development – it incorporates a financially feasible plan for rehabilitation of the airport, assesses existing and forecasted aviation demand and includes a description of facilities required to meet that demand; alternative development schemes, estimated costs, and a schedule for the implementation of capital improvements. An initial feasibility study was conducted and concluded the following for Kickapoo Airpark:

- it was financially feasible for the City to purchase and upgrade the facility;
- if Kickapoo were to close, area airports lacked adequate facilities to accommodate general aviation aircraft;
- if facility closed there would be a significant economic loss to the City;
- building a new airport would be more costly than acquiring Kickapoo; and





- general aviation already well established and stable in Wichita Falls, in large part due to the Airport.

The Plan also addresses drainage analysis, reviews the facility inventory & evaluation of airfield pavement, aviation demand capacity, design criteria, rates and charges; storm water pollution and prevention plan, minimum standards and requirements for airport operations (e.g. runways, taxiways, terminal area, airspace) along with a detailed implementation plan. Additional information about the Kickapoo Downtown Airport Master Plan is available by contacting the City of Wichita Falls Airports Administrator.

Wichita Falls Municipal Airport (SPS) Master Plan Proposal

Prepared by: Wichita Falls Aviation, Traffic & Transportation Dept.

Proposed Master Plan Project & Objectives 2007

A Master Plan is proposed for the Wichita Falls Municipal Airport and is anticipated to be a priority after signing a new 50-year lease agreement in 2008 with the Secretary of the Air Force for commercial airport lands in addition to joint-use of the airfield with Sheppard Air Force Base. Aviation and Transportation Department employees anticipate submitting a grant to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to assist in funding the Master Plan. Items for potential consideration and long-term objectives for a future Master Plan include but may be subject to revision:

- Rehabilitation of Runway 17/35 – runway nearing end of useful life span and upon signing of 2008 lease it will be exclusively used for civilian aircraft operations. Plan will explore options for removal and upgrade of the 7,000 ft asphalt runway along with outlining options for funding assistance.
- New Passenger Terminal – originally constructed in 1959 after various renovations and additions no longer meets demands of commercial travel. Plan would research viable options and ideas for a new passenger terminal, parking facilities and potential funding sources.
- General Aviation Ramp Rehabilitation – aircraft parking areas in need of removal and replacement.
- Small Miscellaneous Projects – e.g. hangar area improvements, fuel farm improvements, perimeter fencing and access control improvements, aircraft wash rack.

Parks and Recreation Documents

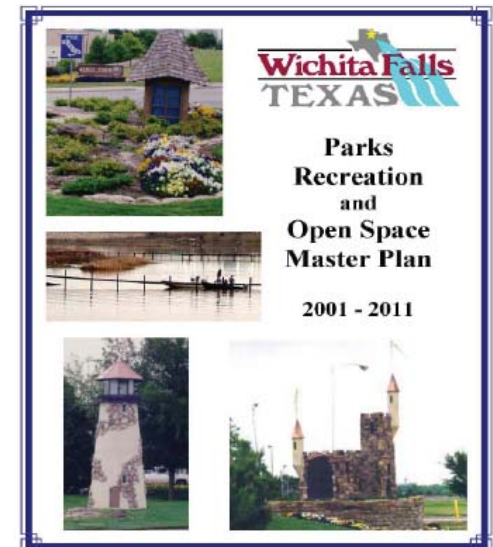
Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan 2001-2011

Prepared by: Wichita Falls Parks & Recreation Staff

Adopted by: Parks Board and City Council – June 5, 2001 (Ord. 54-2001)

The City's Master Plan for Parks, Recreation and Open Space 2001-2011 Plan incorporates various goals and objectives previously established by City Council in 1998, 1999 and those identified by the Park Board in their 5-year Plan through 2006. The Parks Department Master Plan goals include the following:

- Wichita Falls should provide for a wide range of (parks & recreation) opportunities for all citizens and visitors.
- Wichita Falls should distribute parks, recreation facilities, and trails equitably throughout the City.
- Wichita Falls should develop an adequate level of financing for trails, parks, and recreation facilities.
- Wichita Falls should continue to enhance its system of parks, recreation facilities, recreational services and open space.
- Wichita Falls should provide a high quality of parks and recreation facilities and services.
- Wichita Falls should continue to develop a greenbelt/trail system to connect parks and residential areas, in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- Continue to develop and enhance water resource facilities and programs.





When the Master Plan was prepared (2001) the City had 1,083 acres of developed parkland, 650.5 acres of undeveloped parkland and 970.4 acres of undeveloped open space at Lake Arrowhead. In addition, the City is also responsible for and maintains a sports complex (45.8 acres), 4 cemeteries (78.4 acres), landscaped boulevard medians (52.4 acres), turf triangles & turf highway corridors (105.6 acres), concrete and asphalt trails (11 miles), greenway turf (81 acres) and various facility grounds (27.5 acres). Additional information about the City's Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan and priority projects can be obtained by contacting the Director of Parks & Recreation.

Engineering Documents

Wastewater Master Plan 2000-2050

Prepared by: Biggs & Mathews Consulting Engineers, Inc.

Adopted by: City Council – June 1999 (study authorized on August 18, 1998)

The Master Wastewater Plan provides a strategic planning document covering a 50-year time frame for the orderly development and installation of adequate sanitary sewer collection and wastewater treatment facilities within the Wichita Falls metropolitan area. Two primary goals of the Plan include:

- Provide wastewater services to undeveloped areas contiguous to the City of Wichita Falls; and
- Identify methods to reduce surcharging and overloading of the existing collection system while minimizing the number of lift stations within the City's system.

The Plan considers the coverage area and limits for regional wastewater services considering potential population growth, delineates drainage basins (Quincy, Mid-western, Deer Creek, Rathgeber, Kickapoo, State Hospital, Sisk Road, Kovarik, Wichita



Valley, Prison and Plum Creek drainage basins), future land use considerations, flow rates from a Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Study (SSES – 1995) and an analysis of existing facilities (wastewater treatment plants and collection systems). The Plan outlines general long-range conclusions and recommendations but included a detailed planning schedule through 2005. Additional information about the City's Wastewater Plan through 2050 can be obtained by contacting the Director of Public Works.

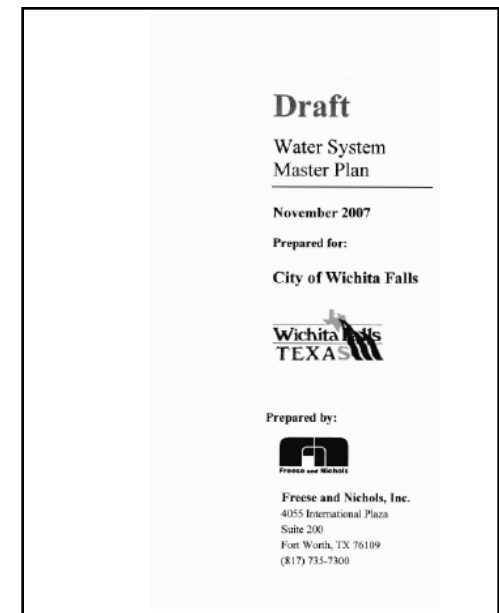
Water System Master Plan 2007-2031 Draft Version

Prepared by: Freese and Nichols, Inc.

Adopted by: Pending Director of Public Works & City Council consideration

At the time of preparing the Defense Diversification Plan, the City's Water System Master Plan was in draft plan format pending final adoption by City Council. The Plan's purpose was to evaluate the City's existing water distribution system and develop a long-range Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) through 2031. It has anticipated the areas of study and proposed Plan recommendations will be recognized and adopted as presented. Focus areas, research and recommendations incorporated into the Plan include:

- Population and water demand projections (5yr; 10yr and 25yr conditions),
- Water model development,
- Field testing and water model calibration,
- Existing water distribution system water quality assessment (central pressure, north





pressure and east pressure plane),

- Condition assessment and hydraulic capacity analysis (average day, max day, and peak hour demand runs along with existing system modeling summary); and
- Development of proposed water system improvement alternatives with cost estimates for three Capital Improvement Plan phasing periods

Phase I – 2007-2011

Recommendations include creating a new west pressure plane, expanding the east pressure plane, connecting 287 west elevated storage tank to Beverly ground storage tank, upgrade the 287 west pump station, and extend service south of City to Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) area.

Phase II - 2012-2016

Recommendations include a new central elevated storage tank along southern ETJ and supply line, new north Beverly ground storage tank and supply line, extend service to new developments on southwest side of City (Sisk/Allendale Rd), extend service to new developments in east pressure plane, and extend service to northern ETJ.

Phase III - 2017-2031

Recommendation for the third phase focused on improving the reliability and operation of the entire water system and included water line expansion along Lake Park Drive from Midwestern Pkwy to Southwest Pkwy., expand facilities to meet growth in the east pressure plane, expand water line along Hines Blvd., incorporate a new water line from 287 west elevated storage tank to the proposed water line from the North Beverly ground storage tank, expand service in the north side of the central pressure plane, and a new supply line to the north pressure plane.

Additional information about the Draft Wichita Falls Water System Master Plan can be obtained by contacting the City's Director of Public Works.

Storm Water Drainage Utility System – Capital Improvement Plan

Prepared by: Wichita Falls Public Works Department

Adopted by: City Council Annually

During fall 2000, City Council authorized the establishment of a Storm Water Drainage Utility System. This system, which took effect on May 1, 2001, provides a funding mechanism for

drainage improvements in the City as allowed under Chapter 402, Subchapter C of the Texas Local Government Code. The system is designed to assign a fair and equitable charge to the public for storm water drainage management services including capital improvements. The fee is based upon the impervious area of all real property, whereby each residential water customer is assessed for one Single Family Living Unit Equivalent (SFLUE) at \$1.50 each month, and each commercial customer pays a multiplier of the SFLUE based upon the impervious area of their property. The charges are included with monthly bill collection and proceeds are deposited into an enterprise fund to be used exclusively for drainage improvement projects. Anticipated storm water revenue funds are projected over a 20-year horizon along with the list of ranked project priorities to develop a timeframe for long-term storm water improvements throughout the City. Approximately \$1 million annually is deposited into the Storm Water Drainage Utility System Fund and project priorities are reviewed annually based on the long-range plan and need. In 2007 City Council authorized a \$6 million bond to assist in expediting the completion of the 55 pending storm water drainage utility projects identified in the Plan. Additional information about the Storm Water Drainage Utility System is available by contacting the City's Public Works Director.

Planning Documents Thoroughfare Plan

Prepared by: Wichita Falls Planning Division staff

Adopted by: Planning & Zoning Commission & City Council update as necessary

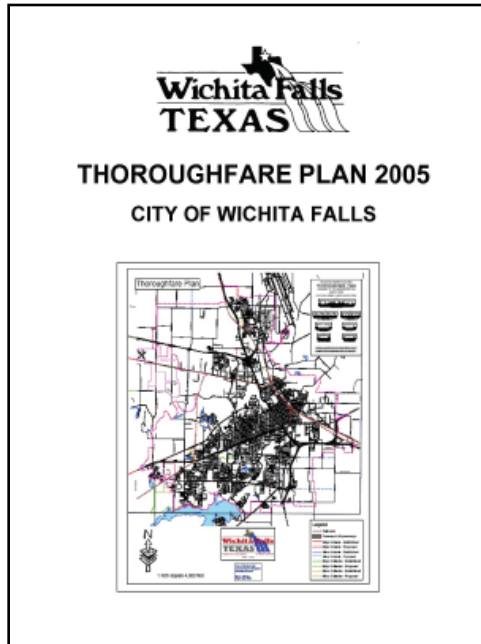
The Wichita Falls Thoroughfare Plan was developed in 1984 with a detailed 20-year focus outlining the City's existing and proposed future street network along with anticipated, minimum right-of-way widths that would be necessary to meet demand. This Plan provides both a short and long-range street focus. In 1996, 1999 and most recently in 2005 the Plan was



updated and revised by City Council on an 'as required' basis to keep pace with development needs. The Wichita Falls Thoroughfare Plan serves two concurrent roles:

- it outlines the functional classification of existing streets/roadways within the City – classified hierarchy of roadways – from cul-de-sacs through freeways based on levels of mobility and access; and
- it delineates proposed logical, long-range street connections and reserves anticipated right-of-way widths to meet future demand.

The Plan serves to improve and enhance commercial and industrial development, promote logical land use patterns, and for streets be utilized for their designed purpose and capacities. The basic functions of the City's street and highway system are to move traffic between dispersed points and provide street access to individual properties. In conjunction, a primary criterion for maintaining an adequate street system is the requirement that any new subdivision take into consideration street layout, arrangement, character, width, grade and location. Additional information regarding the City's Thor-



oughfare Plan is available by contacting the Community Development Department.

Land Use Plan

Prepared by: Wichita Falls Planning Division staff

Adopted by: Planning & Zoning Commission & City Council updated as necessary

The Land Use Plan provides overall guidance for the compatible development of land within the City limits, delivery of municipal services and is a base for determining future capital improvements (utilities, transportation and spatial dispersion and function of public safety facilities). The Plan created numerous land use classifications to address: low density and high density residential; manufactured housing/mobile home parks; light commercial; commercial, light industrial; industrial; institutional; parks & open space; and downtown uses. The current Land Use Plan was updated in 1998 and provides a dual purpose of guiding development decisions on a short and long-range focus. Additional information regarding the City's Land Use Plan is available by contacting the Community Development Department.

Historic Preservation Plan

Prepared by: Wichita Falls Planning Division staff

Adopted by: Landmark Commission & City Council updated as necessary

The Historic Preservation Plan was updated in 2003 and addresses the purpose for the City's recognition of historic resources. The Plan identifies, provides protection for and perpetuates historic landmarks which represent distinctive and important elements of the City's, state's and nation's past. It also provides a mechanism for protecting and enhancing the quality of neighborhoods, reinforces community identity and fosters civic pride in the appearance of the City and in the accomplishments of the past. In conjunction, the Plan outlines the method for nominating a historic resource, the appeal process and requirements for protecting designated historic resources from inappropriate alterations and role and function of the City's Landmark Commission. Additional information regarding the City's Historic Preservation Plan is available by contacting the Community Development



Department.

Consolidated Plan for Housing & Community Development 2006-2009

Prepared by: BBC Research & Consulting

Adopted by: City Council July 5, 2005 (Resolution 96-2005)

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in 1995 began requiring entitlement communities to prepare long-range plans in order to receive federal housing and community development funding assistance. The purpose of the Wichita Falls Consolidated Plan is to:

- Identify the City's housing and community development needs, priorities, goals and strategies; and
- stipulate how funds will be allocated to housing and community development activities.

The Consolidated Plan specifically establishes long-range goals and priorities for the utilization of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG), Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA), Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS); and HOME Investment Partnerships Program for the City of Wichita Falls. The current Plan addresses program years 2005 through 2009.

Additional information regarding the City's Consolidated Housing Plan is available by contacting the Community Development Department.



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